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The Shape of Things

EVER SINCE THE SURRENDER OF ITALY A handful of monarchist generals have been trying to polish up the royal crown, reupholster the throne, and patch the motheaten ermine, but the little King looks shabbier than ever and behaves worse. All the same, the most recent scheme to popularize the monarchy took in so trained an observer as Herbert Matthews of the New York *Times*. For the first time an Italian force was thrown into action against the Germans. Picked with care, this shock unit went into battle under the cross of Savoy, the royal emblem sewed on its uniforms and painted on its vehicles. The men made a brave enough showing but were badly mauled and suffered heavy losses. Nevertheless, wrote Mr. Matthews, they had showed fighting spirit under royalist leadership, and the Italian liberals would have to swallow their notion that a political change was essential before the army would throw itself into the struggle. But Count Sforza quickly pointed out that the military forces raised by the democratic parties have been disbanded by Badoglio and Basso, and that it was in the King's name that "our most valorous soldiers were sent to their deaths . . . in the service of Hitler." The Italian Committee of National Liberation condemned the King as "one of the gravest obstacles to the rebirth of the nation"; anti-royalist meetings in the University of Naples were broken up by Fascist-appointed officials—backed, we regret to say, by the AMG; and Signor Croce raised the possibility of a formal trial for the King unless he abdicated quickly.

*

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IT WAS NOT THE liberals but Mr. Matthews who had to do the notion-swallowing. Four days after the dispatch cited above he reported anti-monarchist sentiment so widespread that "barring Allied support, it looks as if Victor Emmanuel's days as king are numbered." Unhappily it looks even more as though that support will be forthcoming. The Badoglio regime has been vested with a greater degree of authority, and in violation of pledges made at Moscow the Allied governments, through AMG, are threatening a drastic curb on political activity in southern Italy. The Committee of Liberation, whose scheduled conference in Naples was canceled by Allied authorities, has protested vigorously, and a joint decision by London, Wash-

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ington, and Moscow is awaited. The moment is ideal to get behind the plea of the Committee for a Democratic Foreign Policy for suspension of the authority of the monarchy—as in Sicily—and recognition of the Committee of Liberation as an interim administrative agency pending the decision of the Italian people.

✶

HAS THE ITALIAN FRONT BEEN RELEGATED to a minor place in Allied strategy? Certainly our progress there has slowed down to an extent which does not seem entirely attributable to the difficulties of the terrain, the weather, or the stubborn resistance of the enemy. These are obstacles not to be despised, but with the Anglo-American forces believed to be available in the Mediterranean at the time of the invasion of Italy, our overwhelming naval strength, and our marked superiority in the air there can be little doubt that Rome could have been captured by this time if the high command had considered that objective worth a comparatively high price. The fact that no attempt has been made to outflank the Germans by means of amphibious operations has suggested to some commentators a reservation of landing craft for more important work elsewhere. The use of Italian and French troops as reinforcements for the Fifth and Eighth armies may mean the transference of some British and American divisions to other theaters. In this connection it is natural to think of preparations for the coming western front, but an invasion of the Balkans—so often prematurely anticipated that amateur seers no longer like to refer to the subject—cannot be entirely ruled out in view of General Patton's visit to Cairo. Meanwhile the Yugoslav Partisans continue to pin down a very considerable German force. Supplies are being shipped across the Adriatic to this gallant and effective army, though not yet on anything like an adequate scale. One recent cause of delay may have been the devastating German air raid on the Adriatic port of Bari, in which, according to some accounts, as many as seventeen Allied ships were destroyed. The success of this attack is a warning against underrating the Luftwaffe. It still has a high nuisance value.

✶

WINSTON CHURCHILL CAN ILL BE SPARED AT this stage of the war by either Britain or the United Nations, and it is good to learn, as we go to press, that he is on the mend. He showed the courage with which he has fought germs and Nazis alike by carrying on with the grueling round of conferences which began at Cairo, despite the fact that he was far from well when he left London. Before he took to his bed he had shared in the formulation of decisive plans for the achievement of victory. We wish him now a speedy and complete recovery so that his leadership will be available when the time comes to translate those plans into action.

WITH EVERYTHING ELSE HE HAS ON HIS mind, President Roosevelt must now decide whether Negro firemen shall function in the locomotive cabs of Southern railways. Evidence taken by the Fair Employment Practices Committee shows that the roads of the country need 850 more firemen and that many now employed are dangerously green. But the roads refuse to accept the order of the FEPC to cease their discriminatory practices because, they say, to execute the order would be to violate their agreement with the union and thus to "impair the whole war effort." The President is in an extremely difficult position. The FEPC, created by him rather than by Congress, lacks statutory authority. Using his war powers, he might take over the roads in order to force compliance, but it is unlikely that public opinion would indorse so drastic a solution. He could cancel war contracts with the affected roads, but not without almost crippling the war program. A likelier course would be to throw the weight of the Administration behind the Marcantonio bill to give the FEPC statutory power. But a far better solution would be a reversal of policy by the Railroad Brotherhoods, which are at this moment planning a nation-wide strike for higher wages. If white railroadmen are entitled to what they deem adequate pay, surely Negro railroadmen are entitled at least to jobs.

✶

THE CALL OF THE BROTHERHOODS FOR A series of strikes will present another critical challenge to the Administration's efforts to hold the line against inflation. This challenge comes at a time when, as Chairman William H. Davis of the War Labor Board has declared, there seems to be an excellent chance of winning the home-front battle if the line can be held for another ninety days. Since a general railway strike at such a critical stage in the war is unthinkable, most observers assume that the Administration will be forced to give way even to the extent of scrapping the Little Steel formula. The recent action of the Senate in voting an eight-cents-an-hour increase to non-operating railway employees against the recommendation of Price Stabilizer Vinson suggests that Congress is prepared to throw over the Little Steel formula if the Administration is not. There is, of course, a feasible alternative. Congress could even at this late date rally to the support of the OPA's efforts to reduce the cost of living to the level of September 15, 1942, thus drawing the teeth of the brotherhoods' assertion that they are striking "against inflation for the privileged few and deflation for the many." If Congress continues to legislate inflation for the few in disregard of its plain duty, the Administration has no choice but to fight a delaying action on railway and other wages in the desperate hope that the people will force Congress to its senses.

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ON THE SUBSIDY FRONT THE PROSPECTS FOR a compromise that will prevent an abrupt shattering of the stabilization program have substantially improved. Passage of a special resolution extending the life of the Commodity Credit Corporation for sixty days will give consumers and the general public more time to convince Congress that anti-subsidy legislation would be not only bad economics but bad politics as well. The crucial question of how much money will be voted for food subsidies remains, however, to be thrashed out. For an effective job, achieving a sufficient reduction in the cost of living to permit the Little Steel formula to be retained, at least $2,000,000,000 will be required in 1944. The prospects are for a much lower figure unless constituents get in some good work on their Congressmen during the Christmas recess. The news from the even more important tax front is extremely discouraging. Although the Senate Finance Committee added $144,000,000 to the House bill and eliminated the special 3 per cent levy on low incomes, the bill it reported to the Senate is utterly farcical as an anti-inflation measure. The Senate Finance Committee, like the House Ways and Means Committee before it, seemed far more concerned with extracting the last drop of revenue from the low income groups than with drawing off the excess spending power in the hands of the middle and upper income groups. Hence the reimposition of the notorious victory tax and the elimination of earned-income credit, with no increase in the rate on corporations and a reduction in the $10,000-a-year brackets.

*

A FARSIGHTED POST-WAR FARM PROGRAM for returning veterans was presented to the Cooley committee in the House of Representatives last week by Russell Smith, legislative representative of the National Farmers' Union. It calls for the establishment in the Department of Agriculture of an "RFC for family farmers," with special authority to assist veterans after the war. Veterans and family farmers would be given preference in the sale of farmland which had been acquired by the government for war purposes, and there would be a revolving fund to enable them to get started. Loans would also be provided for family-farm cooperatives. The National Farmers' Union presents its plan as a means of reversing dangerous trends in American agriculture. The family farm is in danger of dying out. From 1910 to 1940 the number of farms containing 1,000 acres or more increased more than 100 per cent, and the aggregate number of acres in farms of this class rose in the same period from 167,000,000 to 364,000,000 acres. At the same time the number of small family farms decreased. Since the New Deal there has been a slight downward trend in farm tenancy, and if this could be continued and the number of family farms increased, the basis of post-war democracy would be strengthened.

Letter to a Pfc

Pfc. John Doe, Somewhere in the Pacific

DEAR JACK: It's just as well the morning paper hasn't been slung into your foxhole these past few weeks, because our duly elected representatives in Congress—I'm tempted to say unduly elected in some cases—have been expressing themselves on the question of giving you a chance to vote next year. And a good deal of the discussion, if you can call it that, is not the kind of free speech you'd be particularly interested in dying for.

From where I'm sitting, it does seem that if Congress really wanted "our boys," as they call you so fondly, to have a say in choosing a President in the crucial year of 1944, it could be arranged. From where you're sitting, it must look even more plausible. Some of the ordinary and essentially minor rules about absentee voting would have to be suspended. But after all there's a war on, and several other rules have been suspended for the duration.

All this and a good deal more was pointed out by the sponsors and supporters of a bill that would have simplified the process sufficiently to allow you to cast a vote without taking too much time out from your war work. But in the end the Senate passed a substitute measure which leaves the matter in the hands of the state governments.

If you voted, or tried to vote, last year, you know what that means. Only eight state legislatures will meet in time to simplify absentee voting regulations. In only fifteen states are more than thirty days allowed for obtaining and casting absentee ballots; and all kinds of complex requirements—notices of intent, affidavits, applications, etc.—must be complied with. As a soldier wrote to the New York *Times*, "Anyone who like myself tried to vote in the 1942 election while in the army knows that it would take a very hardy soldier indeed to bother his commanding officer with all the problems of casting one simple vote. In most cases at least *four* interviews would be necessary" (my italics). It's easy to understand why only 28,000 of you voted.

I've already indicated the basic reason that motivated the opposition, which was made up of Southern Democrats and some Northern Republicans. It's very simple. They hate Roosevelt, and they're afraid he'll pick the Democratic candidate next year if he doesn't run himself. They know that the vote of some 9,000,000 of "our boys"—that means you—might decide the election, and they are afraid you might cast your votes for Roosevelt or his candidate. Of course the people who tried to get the vote for you were not unaware of your potential power either, but that doesn't make the behavior of the opposition any more savory.

The most violent and—shall we say?—picturesque orators for the opposition were Senator E. D. Smith of South

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Carolina and Representative John E. Rankin of Mississippi. Both come from poll-tax states where you have to pay to vote. As *PM* pointed out, Rankin owes his political career to the high art of keeping the vote low. In 1942 when he was reelected as usual, only 7,079 votes were cast for him, though the population of his district is given as 263,367. No wonder he believes in the state's right to keep the vote to a manageable size.

Naturally the people who put through the substitute measure don't admit that they don't want you to vote. The very suggestion not only outrages them; it moves them to tears that a crocodile would envy. They rest their case—on the Constitution! Listen, for instance, to "Cotton Ed" Smith. "Mr. President," he said, "I have one platform on which I shall live and die—my loyalty to the Constitution, my loyalty to states' rights, and my loyalty to white supremacy." He apparently never heard of the Fifteenth Amendment, which contains that little phrase about "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." Then he went on to tell a filthy joke about Negroes—on the floor of the United States Senate.

The question is now before the House, but apparently it isn't going to be voted on there until after the Christmas recess. Let's hope all your friends and relatives at home make such a fuss in the meantime that our duly elected representatives won't dare disfranchise you for the duration—and blame it on the Constitution. I'm designing a special New Year's card to send to Representative Rankin and Senator Smith. It's printed on asbestos.

M. M.

Crocodile Tears

"LITERALLY," Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long told the House Foreign Affairs Committee the other day, "the reports of the consular officers to the Department of State form one of the most thrilling and one of the most saddening and awful pages of our humanitarian history." We agree with Mr. Long, though in a sense other than he intended. "We have taken into this country since the beginning of the Hitler regime and the persecution of the Jews, until today," he said, "approximately 580,000 refugees." These figues were intended to impress the committee with the State Department's generosity. Figures could hardly be more deceptive. In the decade 1923-33 more than two million immigrants entered this country. The number given by Mr. Long for the Hitler decade is 75 per cent lower than for the pre-Hitler decade. It is false to describe these 580,000, as he did, as "refugees."

For the nine-year period 1933 to 1942, of 453,205 immigrants admitted to the United States, only 291,112 came from Europe. The rest were from non-European countries, with Mexico and Canada heading the list. Of the European immigrants, 243,420 came from countries now dominated by Hitler, and of all the immigrants during this period, 163,423 were Jews. "We did every legitimate thing we could do," Mr. Long declared. The best answer is the figures on immigration from the Reich itself since Hitler came to power. The annual German quota was 25,957. From the beginning of 1933 to the end of 1942 we admitted 123,573 immigrants from the Reich, less than half quota allotments. Here are the figures by years: 1933, 1,324; 1934, 3,515; 1935, 3,891; 1936, 6,073; 1937, 11,127; 1938, 17,868. In 1938 came the Anschluss, which added the Austrian quota of 1,413 to the German quota of 25,957. It was not until 1939 that we eased up on restrictions which had kept German immigration below quota since Hitler came to power. In 1939 we admitted 32,759 immigrants from Germany and Austria. Since then admissions have been below the combined quota (27,370). In 1940 admissions of German nationals were 26,083; in 1941 they were 15,051; in 1942 they were 4,883. The number admitted fell after the war began on the basis of a new excuse: Gestapo agents were invading the country behind rabbinical beards. The door, as Mr. Long said, "is open" but "carefully screened." Considering the thousands of applications, it should have been possible, if the department had been really generous, to do that "screening" and still admit the full quota each year.

Mr. Long made much of the fact that visitors' visas were used to permit some entries above quota, and gave the impression that this was largely to help Jewish refugees. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1942, the number entering on visitors' visas was 82,457 (2,292 of them Jews), the number departing 67,189 (1,250 of them Jews). Net: 15,268 on visitors' visas, 1,042 Jews. Most of the visitors were just visitors. In the last half of last year the net remaining on visitors' visas was 8,688, of which 134 were Jews. We do not believe that Jews require or ask more consideration than any other anti-fascist refugees, but they deserve at least as much. In the light of those figures we think it was hypocritical and unfair of Long to tell the committee that the State Department "cannot exclude persons from our sympathy and our sympathetic attention if they are not Jews," and thus inspire Mundt of South Dakota to reply, "It seems to me that would be treading a pretty dangerous path. It is sort of doing the Hitler thing in reverse." On the contrary, all that is asked is that Jewish refugees get as sympathetic consideration as non-Jewish and that some agency be established, as suggested by the Baldwin-Rogers resolution, to help save the stateless Jews of occupied Europe who have no government to speak for them. The need for some such agency, and the danger of leaving the fate of these people in the hands of professional Anglo-American diplomats, is thoroughly demonstrated by Long's attempt to confuse the issue and mislead the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

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Year's End

By FREDA KIRCHWEY

WHILE Mr. Churchill recuperates in the sun of Egypt, he should have a chance to do a little quiet thinking about this war in which he plays so pivotal a role. If he uses his enforced rest for that purpose, it will be time well spent—however it may irk his impatient spirit. For at the year's end the progress of the war bears thinking about.

Mr. Roosevelt, brown and healthy after his safe return from the Middle East, is reported as exuberantly optimistic. Mr. Eden, in his careful speech to the Commons, was also, if more soberly, cheerful. Neither one told much about the results of the conferences they had attended, and perhaps nothing further can be told; but both emphasized again the improved relations among the major Allied powers resulting from the talks. I hope their good spirits are genuine; but so far the only evident result of the new unity is a great increase in political activity on the part of the Soviet Union. It is as if Moscow and Teheran had served as green lights assuring Russia that it could now drive ahead in Central and Eastern Europe without arousing the opposition or fear of its Western allies. Nowhere can one discern that common action which the recent talks seemed so definitely to promise. While Britain and the United States pursue their traditional policies, Moscow's moves are rapidly changing the political structure of the Continent.

The Czech-Russian treaty is an example. Planned long before Moscow and delayed as a result of British pressure, the treaty is an important stone in the construction of a new Central Europe. It would be too crude to say that Dr. Benes is putting Czechoslovakia under Russian protection. But he is at least establishing a connection so close as to guarantee his country against any future German threat—or any future Munich. The much-advertised clause inviting Poland's adhesion may have been inserted on the insistence of London and Washington, but the fact that both Czechs and Russians freely discuss their "common frontier" suggests that only a Poland prepared to give up its 1939 eastern boundary can share the security provided by the new pact.

The Soviet Union is also hurrying matters toward a climax in the Balkans. No one knows exactly how far the direct influence of Moscow has penetrated, but it is certain that the Bulgarian Partisans, like their brothers in Yugoslavia, are encouraged and backed by Russia. In Bulgaria the division is simple. Lift off the small pro-German ruling clique and the country is solidly and traditionally with Russia. The chance of an early collapse of the Nazi-controlled regime is good; if it comes, only a full occupation of the country by German troops can prevent the establishment of a pro-Russian government and the rise of a Bulgarian army to fight the Axis.

Greece presents a somewhat similar picture, although the influence of Russia is less evident. As long ago as June, 1942, *The Nation* published an article by Leigh White which described the attitude of Greek patriots toward King George and his reactionary regime. It was clear even then that resistance to the Germans inside Greece was weakened by the unpopular leadership of the government in exile. But Allied support of the royal government continued until just the other day, when the King issued a statement in Cairo, obviously the result of British pressure, announcing that the time of his return to Greece would "be determined when the hour of liberation" strikes. King George cannot be expected actually to step down from his throne until he receives another prod. But his end is clear.

And so is the end of the royal government of Yugoslavia. Britain and the United States are deeply committed to King Peter's regime; to break relations with it will seem a breach of faith and throw confusion into the ranks of the other exiled governments. It will also, above all, announce to the world the failure of British-American diplomacy in the Balkans and the success of Russia's policy. But the issue will have to be faced, and soon; for the new Partisan government has formally requested recognition, and Russia is not likely to delay long in giving it. Tito's army constitutes the advance guard of the Allied invasion of the Balkans. If his government requires Allied recognition in order to function effectively, it will get it. The British and Americans will do what they must; but again, as in Greece, they will do it only after events drive them to. For they never see in advance—*never*—that the popular forces in each occupied country are the ones to which they must ultimately turn for help.

Nowhere is this more dramatically demonstrated than in Italy, where the happenings of the last few days bear out word for word the analysis by Gaetano Salvemini published in recent issues of *The Nation*. The latest results of AMG policy are discussed elsewhere in this issue; here it is necessary only to suggest that among the subjects Mr. Churchill might contemplate during his convalescence is the dismal failure of Allied strategy in Italy. For our political and military record in that country provides a good sample by which to judge British-American methods in general.

Let Mr. Churchill ask himself why it is that the whole of Southeastern Europe is swinging toward Russia as toward a giant magnet. Let him ask himself why it is that in France and French North Africa and the French Levant and in Sicily and Italy popular feeling has shifted from warm friendship for the British and Americans to dull resentment. Let Mr. Churchill consider, as the year ends, how he and Mr. Roosevelt have been conducting their entire political war.

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A new power structure is being built on the Continent. Theoretically it rests equally on the resources and energy of the three great nations that have so recently pledged their united effort for the war and the peace. Actually its main underpinnings are being laid in Moscow. Day by day Russia is increasing its political strength in Europe. By clinging to their assortment of discredited kings and generals and dictators, Britain and the United States are day by day losing the good-will of the peoples. Even their military plans are threatened by their political mistakes. And this, above all, is something for Mr. Churchill to think about, now that he has a little time on his hands.

Grist for Goebbels

BY I. F. STONE

WERE the principal events of the past week in Washington to be broadcast by the Axis radio, listeners in occupied Europe and Asia would be inclined to dismiss what they heard as typical Axis exaggerations, if not downright lies. They would hear that in America race prejudice was still so strong that sixteen Southern railroads preferred to suffer from a shortage of firemen rather than hire unemployed Negroes qualified by experience for such work. They would hear that in America respect for authority was so weak, recognition of the need for discipline in war time so rudimentary, that when a Presidential committee ordered those railroads to cease discriminating against Negroes, they publicly announced their refusal to obey and were applauded for it in Congress. Listeners under the Nazi heel, aware of the uses to which prejudice can be put, might be tempted to suspect American railroad "capitalists" of pitting race against race. But they would feel certain that they were listening to some more of Goebbels's handiwork if the Axis radio ventured to tell them that the action of the railroads was largely due to pressure from one of the most advanced sections of the American labor movement, the Railroad Brotherhoods. Past experience with Axis propaganda might lead listeners to scoff at the statement that these progressive unions had been forcing railroads to discharge Negro firemen and give their jobs to white. The Axis radio would purport to quote a Malcolm Ross, chairman of the President's Fair Employment Practices Committee, as explaining that Negroes had done most of the work as firemen on Southern railroads for half a century "until automatic stokers and Diesel-powered engines changed the dirty, heavy work into desirable jobs." The implications of this would seem another of those ugly Nazi canards, aimed this time at the working class of the South. These same brotherhoods—let us imagine we are listening for a moment longer to that Axis radio—are prepared to tie up the whole American railroad system on the eve of the second-front invasion. The five operating brotherhoods have ordered a strike to begin on December 30, and this order is the work not of an irresponsible minority manipulating the unions but of democratic processes and majority vote. The term "majority vote" is inadequate. For the vote was almost unanimous: 97.7 per cent of the 350,000 operating workers cast their ballot for strike action.

Their grievance is that a government board granted a four-cents-an-hour raise. They are prepared to strike for eight cents. (Sophisticated French workers accustomed to the tactics used by the "capitalist" press to inflame soldiers against workers will think this familiar propaganda when they hear it over their radios.) The non-operating unions are also threatening a strike. They want an eight-cents-an-hour raise "straight across the board." They were awarded a raise ranging from ten cents an hour for the lowest-paid workers to four cents an hour for the highest. The difference between the award and the demand in terms of total aggregate wage increase for non-operating railway workers is estimated at less than 10 per cent. (Imagine listening to this through the ears of a Chinese or a Yugoslav guerrilla.) Axis propaganda operates on the principle that the bigger the lie the harder it is for common folk to doubt it. But here we encounter the corollary: the more shameful the truth the harder it is for common folk to believe it.

I suppose many members of the brotherhoods will consider this unfair. Like everyone else, they have their grievances. The wages of the operating railroad workers have not risen as much as those of workers in manufacturing industries, but they were a good deal higher to start with. The question they must ask themselves is whether the difference between four cents an hour and eight cents an hour is worth a nation-wide strike call in the midst of a great war. I know that they feel pretty certain that there will be no strike. But what of the soldier abroad who hears of this strike call? What are his feelings likely to be? Will he be more friendly or less to the labor movement on his return, when American labor may face the greatest battle of its existence? Can brotherhoods which practice prejudice-as-usual and resort to strikes-as-usual expect to be considered on any better level than men who practice business-as-usual? The non-operating railroad workers have a stronger case than the operating, for they include some of the lowest-paid work-

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ers in the country. But the Vinson formula which they rejected would have given the lowest-paid third in their ranks more than an eight-cent raise. The question they must ask themselves is whether the minor difference between the Vinson award and the eight-cents-for-all that they want is worth the passage of the Truman resolution, a resolution which throws the doors open to a series of measures which will boost the cost of living.

The seventy-four-to-four vote in the Senate for the Truman resolution derived from many sources, few flattering to labor. One was the power of an organized minority like the brotherhoods. Another was the fear, expressed on the Senate floor, that the alternative would be a strike, and that the strike would lead to government operation of the roads, which are waxing fat on war profits. A third was the desire of the pro-inflationary forces in agriculture and industry further to compromise the hold-the-line fight, to make passage of subsidy legislation more difficult, to clear the way for similar legislation on milk, coal, oil, and a long list of other products. A Congress which talks as though it believes in laissez faire is entering with enthusiasm into the game of raising prices and wages by legislative fiat, an easy way to buy votes. The cost will be national disaster, with labor among the worst sufferers. A taste of what is coming may be obtained from the Disney bill to boost the price of crude oil, which passed the House 171 to 92, despite a brave fight by two oil-district Congressmen, Monroney of Oklahoma and Patman of Texas.

The pernicious parity concept, which tore a gap in the dike against inflation at the very beginning by boosting food prices, is extended by the Disney bill to petroleum. This threatens to launch a kind of leapfrog advance to inflation. The general commodity index, thanks largely to higher farm prices, has risen much more than prices of basic commodities like oil, which we have hitherto managed to hold down. "Parity" here means that we must provide an equivalent increase for crude oil. This in turn will push the general index still higher, laying the basis for further "parity" increases. Under this system the sky's the limit. There is no doubt that some marginal oil men have suffered from higher costs, and premium payments might well be used to stimulate the digging of new wells. But to grant a price boost of from thirty-five to seventy-four cents a barrel, as the Disney bill would, to all producers, further enriching some of the biggest profiteers in the war, is economically indefensible and politically scandalous.

O Little Town . . . (Restricted)

BY WILLSON WHITMAN

WREATHS on the doors of old white houses, wine-glass elms curving above quiet streets, snow caught on carved gateposts—in winter Litchfield, Connecticut, looks like a village on a Christmas card. It is beautiful in summer, too. But on Christmas Eve, with candles behind the fanlights on North Street, it is a lovely picture of Christmas peace.

No railroad and no movies—that we knew, but there had been an inn on the Green where travelers could spend the night. Now it wasn't there.

"No, no inn," they told us cheerfully at the drugstore after we got off the bus.

"But surely this isn't a town without an inn?" we said, up and down the street.

"I'm afraid so," replied the well-dressed customer at the grocery. She said it a bit smugly, as she might have said "no movies," and we began to feel unwanted. It hadn't been like this before. Then, though we had arrived after dark, unannounced, the people at the inn had made us welcome.

Finally we discovered the comfortable house which took tourists and the restaurant that furnished meals. It was at lunch that we got our next shock. The restaurant seemed to be patronized chiefly by townsfolk—there was, one gathered, a servant problem in Litchfield. Two Helen Hokinson ladies, natives, glared resentfully at the next table, where people were sitting whom we hadn't noticed until we followed the glare. Then it was unnecessary to hear what the ladies were saying. We were reminded of something we had heard or read— "They don't let Jews live in this town." Could it be true?

Was it true that even Einstein couldn't live in Litchfield? Why, right out there on the Green was a tablet to show where Lyman Beecher's church had stood, and Harriet Beecher Stowe was born here. Litchfield couldn't be a place for race prejudice. It couldn't be true, but we found it was—in America, in the United States, in New England, in the year of our Lord 1943.

Litchfield, Connecticut, was named for Lichfield in England. The T was put in by accident, but perhaps appropriately. T is for Tory, and many Litchfielders would have gone on drinking tea and paying the king's tax. Dates on the lovely old houses on North Street—1761, 1773—show that the people who lived there were good substantial citizens before the Revolution. One of the

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descendants, living in the same house, turned down membership in the D. A. R. "My ancestors sided with the British," she told them, "and I think I would have too."

Of course there is a Revolutionary tradition—George Washington slept here, and Ethan Allen, some say, was born here. But that is disputed; associations with Aaron Burr and Benedict Arnold are clearer.

It is the Civil War tradition that counts. This is the Beechers' own town. There were Howes here, too—today a Howe runs the Litchfield *Enquirer*, founded in 1825. And out in the hills, not far away, John Brown was born. Idealists, these, but there were fighters as well; the monument on the Green carries the names of boys who died at Cold Harbor and elsewhere in Virginia, and even down in Texas. You don't need the flag and the background of elms and white-trimmed red brick to tell you that here is a town in the sound American tradition, a town that should make two Southern visitors raised in the land of Jim Crow feel ashamed of themselves.

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord; his soul goes marching on. But Governor Lehman couldn't live here, or Justice Frankfurter?

Litchfield doesn't work for its living, of course; it doesn't have to. There isn't a factory or a labor union in the town. It was not always so; at the start Litchfield had a lot of industries. In 1810, according to the *Gazeteer of the States of Connecticut and Rhode Island*, the most important local industry was iron manufacture, requiring four forges, a slitting mill, and a nail factory. There were also a cotton mill, mills for oil and paper and grain, and no fewer than eighteen sawmills. Besides the five large tanneries there were "several on a smaller scale" and five saddlers to use the leather. There were two hatters' shops and two comb factories, two carriage-makers, a maker of fine furniture, and "a number of house carpenters, joiners, and smiths and other mechanics."

Not least worthy of mention is the builder who liked pineapple gateposts and Palladian windows. But all this was in the handicraft period, before the mills sprang up on the fall line and the railroads followed trade. After that happened, Litchfield's only money-making institutions were professional: Miss Pierce's school for young ladies on North Street, and Judge Tapping Reeve's law school on South Street. The young ladies married the young lawyers. One or two of the latter, like John C. Calhoun, got to be well known.

Lawyers and bankers lived on North Street, and preachers of course; and after the old families died out the new people coming in were those who conducted their business elsewhere. As we learned these facts, it was clear to a Southern mind that the pattern of old towns in Virginia and South Carolina was repeated here in the Connecticut hills.

But Litchfield has its great tradition of freedom. It was a station, they say, on the Underground Railroad. It can't be true that today Bernard Baruch or Robert Moses couldn't buy a lot in Litchfield.

"It isn't true. There is a Jewish lawyer living right in Litchfield and doing business there."

The exception proves the rule. The lawyer, still a young man, has lived his whole professional life in Litchfield; he came from law school in New York and Boston and went to work in Judge Hubbard's office. The old judge was an Episcopalian and a good solid citizen. The boy didn't "look Jewish," didn't "act Jewish," and had a name that might have been German. People liked him and still do. Even before the old judge died he was doing most of the work, and so people just went on with him. The firm name is the same, and some new people coming into the office call him Hubbard and make remarks about the Jews right before him, the way they are apt to do in Litchfield.

He takes it well; he belongs to the men's forum at the Congregational Church, and for a while he owned the *Enquirer*. Maybe he got a kick out of that. But he doesn't put himself forward otherwise. It was years before he bought a house, and then he had more sense than to buy one on North Street. When he sells North Street property now, he knows without being told that he is not to sell it to one of his own race.

Lonesome? Maybe, when people make thoughtless remarks. But he has money, and friends elsewhere, and he could leave if he wanted to. Maybe he likes staying to prove he has a right to stay. Maybe he thinks that in time the prejudice will die out.

Others think differently. A world-famous musician and composer, a playwright, a writer on public affairs—several people whose names are household words in America—Jewish by descent or marital connection, have seen the charm of Litchfield and, perhaps wisely, passed it by.

Won't the war make a change?

There are a hundred stars on the service flag at Litchfield's Catholic church, seventy-five stars on the Episcopal flag, and forty on the Congregational. The war has made changes in Litchfield life, brought many minor inconveniences. It is a wonder to an outsider where the Helen Hokinson ladies who come shopping on the Green get their gasoline.

There is war industry in nearby Bantam, and even a housing problem for workers. The Bantam plant makes aluminum devices for planes and has been doing war work since 1939. But although Bantam is the older community, its relatively modern ways leave Litchfield untouched, or, as Litchfielders would put it, unspoiled.

Litchfield shows no sign of reaction to world thought later than, say, the Nürnberg laws. The *Enquirer* had an

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editorial on "Our Town and Its Future" which suggested that the future might "differ, it may be radically in some respects, from conditions we have known at any other period in our past." Comments from "thoughtful men and women" were invited, and one citizen responded with a column-length letter containing this paragraph:

> Because of its isolation, the ideas of its founders, and the general type of the residents whom it has attracted through the years, Litchfield has from its foundation contributed more to the cultural values of life than to its material phases. . . . The town has been thought of chiefly as a cultural community. It therefore tends to attract new residents from those who seek cultural surroundings. These in turn spread the flavor of culture and enhance its reputation from that standpoint. Wherever Litchfield is known, its name is held in great respect because of the atmosphere which is thus attributed to it.

The writer continued along this line to the conclusion that any form of material progress that detracted from its cultural distinction would harm the town. Another reader corrected the newspaper's statement that in 1800 Litchfield had been the fourth-largest town in Connecticut; it was in 1810. There seemed to be no unfavorable reaction to the editorial disclosure that in 1940 the population was 600 less than it had been 130 years before.

Some kinds of population, of course, Litchfield just doesn't want. A good many people whose books are in the town library, whose music couldn't be kept off the air, are barred from buying property in Litchfield. Cannot a cultural community choose its own kind of culture? And, in truth, are there no cultural values—precious, irreparable old things—to be lost in the inrush of the vulgar and the foreign? No movie house on the Green—you were glad of that. No trains to smudge the white-painted fanlights. Why not let Litchfield and the few old towns that are left keep themselves to themselves, as wreaths and wax fruit were kept under glass bells in old-fashioned parlors?

Years ago James Truslow Adams wrote an article on what he called the law of diminishing returns applied to places. In his recollection, he said, Montauk Point on Long Island had been a lovely, quiet spot—a place of natural beauty. Now it was full of pop bottles. He didn't mind sharing Montauk Point, he said, but the fact was that nobody now had the Montauk Point that had been. Trampled by the herd, it was gone forever. It couldn't be shared. It no longer existed.

So Litchfield, shared, would cease to exist? It is one of those deep instinctive arguments hard to combat because they aren't brought into the open. It would be easy to love Litchfield to death. It's only a little town.

But what about Litchfield's contribution to cultural values elsewhere? Other Connecticut towns—Old Lyme, and Sharon of the beautiful Hebraic name—don't welcome Jews either. Jews aren't wanted in the New York suburbs of Bronxville and Jackson Heights. Only a little cancer, but it grows. Surveys show anti-Semitic prejudice throughout the country to be increasing, and to be greatest not in the prejudice-ridden South but in educated New England.

When we have to face the issue of post-war immigration, such prejudice must be considered. We could do worse than adopt a proposal made many years ago—that we continue to welcome immigration but assign the immigrants to specific regions. Professionally trained refugees could then be directed to parts of the country where doctors or lawyers are needed, farm workers could be absorbed in rural districts, and so on. Litchfield might be saved by this solution, though it could hardly be expected to show gratitude since the author of the proposal was a Jewish correspondent of the New York *Herald* named Karl Marx.

Meanwhile, why not leave Litchfield in peace, resisting modernization in all its ugly forms? Like Charleston *contra mundum*,* let the natives withstand any foreign invasion, bar Italians and Germans and all sorts of people with different cultures.

Only they don't say, in Litchfield, "We won't sell or rent property to Italians or Germans or White Russians or Poles." They say, "We won't sell or rent to Jews." The town of the Beechers has already changed, where it matters—in the head, in the heart.

Litchfield churches are important. St. Anthony's, Roman Catholic, is best attended; St. Michael's, Episcopal, has the most expensive altar. There is no synagogue, naturally, although a builder too lazy to construct a pentagon has put two six-pointed stars on the Methodist church. The Congregational church is oldest and most important. The building where Beecher preached is gone now, but the white church on the Green, with the boxed-in pews, is older.

Litchfield clergymen, like clergymen everywhere, are approachable. They will even talk about anti-Semitism.

"It's not a new idea in the town," one minister said. "It's just that Litchfield people are conservative."

"And they think they have a right to do as they please with their own property?"

"Exactly. And with their social life. They don't welcome strangers of any sort very readily, I'm afraid."

The minister seemed honestly not to understand, at first, a Southerner's questions about the race problem in Harriet Beecher Stowe's home town. A Litchfield lady who owned a house at Bantam had rented to Negroes, and it hadn't been a popular gesture, but otherwise he knew of no race problem.

"Then it isn't true that Jews can't buy property?"

* *The Nation*, November 20, 1943.

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Oh, that. Yes, it was true, he believed. Just a sort of general agreement—yes, you could call it a Christian unity among Litchfield people on that point. He smiled at that. No, they didn't realize that it was Hitler's party line. Just didn't follow it through. And of course there had been people who admired Mussolini because he made the trains run. As for this Jewish question—

He was as polite and as distressed as a Mississippi minister asked why Negroes can't vote, and quite as helpless to mend matters. He saw no likelihood of change except as the older generation died off. "Certainly not because of the Four Freedoms," he said with a Republican glint in his eye. But there really was no problem because there were no Jews in the town, except of course the one lawyer who was well thought of.

"Just what they say down South—there's no Negro problem except when the Yankees try to make one. Southerners keep them in their place, in the Jim Crow car."

For some reason he didn't quite like that, but he was urbanity itself as he accepted a Southerner's compliments on Litchfield architecture.

"Yes. Yes. And shall we say, next time you come we hope you won't find North Street full of Jews?"

It was a time to wonder whether the successors to the Beecher pulpit in Litchfield ever had occasion to dust off the Beecher sermon preached sixty-six years ago on the occasion of an exhibition of anti-Semitism new and shocking to this country—the exclusion of Jewish guests from the Grand Union Hotel at Saratoga Springs. Dr. Beecher reviewed at length civilization's debt to the Jews in morals, politics, and social justice, and the particular religious debt of all Christians. He noted with approval that "they are becoming land-holders in America. . . . They come here to live and stay; and their children will intermarry with ours; their blood will flow into the common stream with ours; and if their virtues might be incorporated with ours it would be of unspeakable advantage to us." He added a hope: "May they understand that under this government there is no place to which they may not aspire—no sphere of finance, no walk in literature, no avenue to honor, no field of art or of science, which is shut to them. The heaven above their head is not more free to every one of them than all the ways of men in this land."

So spoke Beecher; and in Litchfield the great Beecher elm still lifts its branches to the heaven he saw arching above North Street. But the clergyman now standing in Beecher's shoes made it plain, in a pleasant-spoken way, that Beecher's hope was mistaken. St. Peter and St. Paul couldn't live on North Street.

Noël, Noël,
Born is the King of Israel.

Don't go to Litchfield for Christmas. The Son of David couldn't be born there, even in a stable.

50 Years Ago in "The Nation"

THE GOVERNMENT RECEIPTS for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1893, were about $2,000,000 in excess of the expenditures. For the present fiscal year it is expected that they will be $28,000,000 less than the expenditures.—*December 7, 1893.*

PROF. TYNDALL was one of the three or four men who have made English science in the nineteenth century famous for its union of German thoroughness of research with French lucidity of expression. . . . Tyndall came into great disrepute with the religious world in 1872 by his bold suggestion that the efficacy of prayer be made a subject of scientific experiment.—*December 7, 1893.*

THE PRACTICE, on the part of the athletic element in the colleges, of seeking them [athletes] out, and bribing them by offers of a free education to come to one college rather than another, has become unhappily common, and has ceased to seem discreditable; that is, very young boys are invited to become professionals, and to take what is in reality a salary for acting as football players in the guise of students. —*December 7, 1893.*

SOME ARTISTIC GIFT BOOKS for Young and Old: . . . "Zig Zag Journeys on the Mediterranean," by Hezekiah Butterworth; "Ruby's Ups and Downs," by Minnie E. Paull, author of "Ruby and Ruthy." (ADVT.)—*December 14, 1893.*

THE ONLY PRACTICAL EFFECT of the gathering of the striking Danbury hatters in town meeting to vote themselves $50,000 will probably be the speedy bringing of the absurdity into the courts to have the sawdust let out of it.—*December 14, 1893.*

IF THERE WERE no other reason for pleasure in the appearance of "David Balfour," it is enough that Mr. Stevenson has shaken off the spell of the South Seas and returned to those scenes which have provided his strongest literary inspirations.—*December 14, 1893.*

SENATOR VOORHEES has recovered from the lucid interval with which he was mysteriously afflicted when the repeal of the Sherman [silver-purchase] law was before the Senate, and is now quite himself again with his bill, introduced on Thursday, to "go the Sherman law several worse" and play the mischief generally with the currency. He acutely remarks that "no one will be surprised by my introduction of such a bill." Neither by that nor by any other bit of demagogy on his part.—*December 21, 1893.*

MR. DAMROSCH DESERVES and unquestionably has the support of the public in his struggle with the Mutual Musical Protective Union, which succeeded in preventing him from giving a concert on Sunday evening.—*December 21, 1893.*

BOOKS OF THE WEEK: Huxley, Prof. T. H., "Darwiniana." Irving, Henry, "The Drama."—*December 21, 1893.*

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The New Pacific Front

BY DONALD W. MITCHELL

THE outstanding war news of the past few weeks concerns the developing American offensive in the Central and Southwest Pacific. Though they have been cautiously conducted in order to avoid heavy casualties, the recent thrusts in these areas are the most important moves made by the United States in a year.

The offensive is two-pronged. In the Southwest Pacific the forces under General MacArthur have been moving west and north in the general direction of the Philippines. The story of their progress repeats itself: heavy air bombardment of a strong point is followed by an advance on land and sea from one base to another. Unfortunately, at each step stubborn Japanese resistance and the obstacle of the jungle cause a long delay which gives the enemy a chance to strengthen the base to which he retires. The desirability of this method of getting to Tokyo cannot be justly gauged at the moment, for we have used only small contingents in our attempt to advance. It should be recalled, moreover, that the southern route was not our choice but was forced on us by the necessity of defending Australia and New Zealand. Since the limited forces then available did not permit diversions elsewhere, we were obliged to wage war in an unfavorable area, where two years of fighting, though they have inflicted large losses on the enemy, have not brought us much closer to the Japanese mainland. The Solomons—most of them—a few outlying islands, and a third of New Guinea are piker profits from so long a struggle. At this rate twenty years might well elapse before our soldiers marched down the streets of Tokyo. The snail's pace cannot be attributed to defective direction, for our leadership in this area, with some lapses, has been sound though exceedingly cautious. Greater boldness may come with the greater military might we can now supply.

The length and difficulty of the southern road to Tokyo lend significance to the recent venture into the Central Pacific, by which the Gilbert Islands were captured in four days. The venture was an experiment with a different technique of war in a new and promising area, though it was aided by the bases so laboriously obtained farther south, which supplied many of the planes for the preliminary softening by air. The lessons learned from this experiment should enable us to shorten the Pacific war.

The details of the expedition, reported far better than has been the navy's usual practice, are of interest. After neutralization of nearby air bases, a huge fleet, covered by its own planes, moved in for the kill. Unlike the Japanese in similar cases, we did not send a boy to do a man's work but provided a naval force more than adequate for the purpose. There were two good reasons for its size: first, nothing short of the main Japanese fleet could have challenged us with any prospect of success; and, second, a large force could do the job more quickly and with smaller loss.

The last step, the landing of marines to mop up resistance, proved by far the hardest, and demonstrated the limitations of both air power and sea power. Despite the most intense bombardment from land and sea Japanese pillboxes had to be cleaned out the hard way. Inevitably losses at Tarawa were large, though well below those of the enemy. While better management in the future may reduce such losses, we must expect to pay a substantial price for further gains.

Nevertheless, the Central Pacific route to Japan has many advantages over island-hopping in the southwest. It avoids the long circuitous approach through the Southern Hemisphere, and it presents fewer natural obstacles. Most of the atolls of the Gilbert, Marshall, Caroline, Marianas, and Bonin groups are small, flat, and rather barren. Operations are hindered neither by the dense jungles of the South Pacific nor by the weather troubles of the Aleutians. An invaded island can be won in a few days, or even hours. Finally, a success would place American bases on the flank of all southward Japanese communications. Before the war these advantages were considered so important that the approach through the Central Pacific was regarded as the best if not the only feasible way to attack Japan.

In one respect operations in the Gilberts and Marshalls have been disappointing: the navy has failed to exploit fully the element of surprise by mounting other invasions immediately after seizing the Gilberts. True, the delay has allowed us time for the consolidation of gains and for making any tactical changes suggested by experience—in other words, it will help to keep down future casualties—but it has also afforded breathing-time to the enemy and given good notice of American intentions. However, the flexibility of our war plans in the Pacific makes a shift of attention to a new area always possible.

On the other side of the world, the Russian front has reached something approaching temporary stability, and it is possible to weigh the results of a year of fighting. During 1943 the northern part of the front has remained

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nearly stationary, but in the central and southern sectors the Red Army has gained hundreds of miles. The battle line has swung as on a hinge and at present runs almost directly north and south except near the Sea of Azov. The front has thus been reduced in length by several hundred miles.

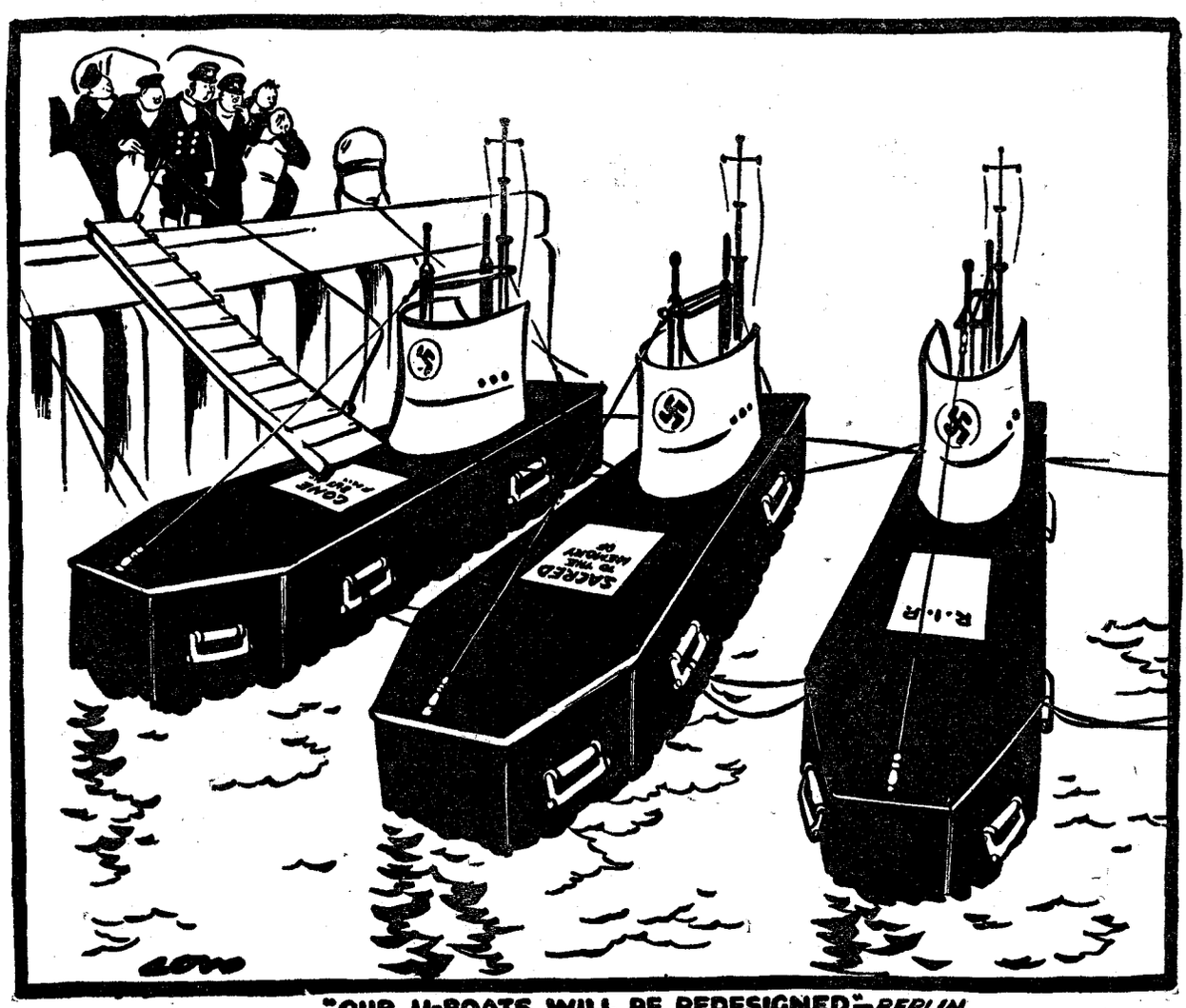
On two occasions during the past year the Wehrmacht came very close to the sort of disaster which could have ended the war. In February the German armies in the south were flanked and threatened with encirclement. More recently, in late October and early November, the simultaneous successes scored in sealing the Crimea and in pushing down from the Dnieper bend toward Krivoirog seriously imperiled perhaps sixty German divisions. None of the later Russian attacks on the central front have offered so serious a threat.

The escape of the Germans from these two traps is typical of what they have been able to do even in defeat. In both cases sharp attacks on Red Army units which had outrun their supply lines gave the threatened armies the chance to escape destruction. Bad weather also played a part in slowing Russian progress at critical moments.

Despite their stinging defeats the Germans are still extremely powerful on land. They have had to conduct some long retreats in order to survive, but these retirements, made with great skill, have usually served their purpose. Moreover, the logistics problem of the Germans has been eased while that of the Allies has been made harder. Both in Italy and Russia the Nazis are fighting skilfully and well. They cannot, of course, retreat indefinitely, but they can still fall back for hundreds of miles before Germany is subjected to the horrors of invasion. From time to time reports of lowered enemy morale make their appearance, but in general these have not been substantiated on the battlefield.

For several weeks neither side has made any large territorial gains. Minor actions have occurred on the central front, at the Kiev bulge, and in the Dnieper bend as the Germans have counter-attacked and striven to lessen the Russian threat. In all likelihood the present comparative lull, which is mainly due to the weather, is being used by both sides in preparation for a greater struggle.

The steps being taken by the Germans are certain to prove mainly defensive since all chance of a complete military victory has evaporated. While the Nazis can set up defenses farther west, they would probably prefer to anchor as much of their defense on the Dnieper as possi-



"OUR U-BOATS WILL BE REDESIGNED"—BERLIN

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ble and will therefore fight to hold their present positions.

Far more important are the plans of the Soviets. Since a strong German offensive is a very remote possibility, they no longer have an incentive to hold huge armies in reserve as during former years. On the contrary, in 1944 the Red armies have every reason to attack relentlessly in an effort to win the complete military decision which so narrowly escaped them in 1943. Reserves may be thrown in now for another reason also. Stalin has certainly been promised in very definite terms the long-demanded Anglo-American assault on Western Europe. Only the time and place of the attack and its relationship to a Russian offensive remain uncertain. It is very possible that either the Anglo-American zero hour will be moved up or the Russian time-table slowed down to assure a simultaneous attack from many directions and prevent much shifting of enemy reserves.

While the main European front has been comparatively quiet, the Allies have scored tactical gains on the Atlantic and in the air over Europe. In both theaters Germany's widely heralded new weapons have been unable to reverse the trend toward defeat. The leveling-off of American shipbuilding, coming on top of record-breaking production, tells a story which is confirmed by news releases on submarine sinkings. Submarines are now a major nuisance, not a major threat.

Improved German defense against air attacks has been met by an alteration in bombing tactics. Feints, the use of cloud masses to hide attackers, the splitting up of fleets to attack several objectives, the repeated saturation bombings of an especially valuable target are not new, but they have recently been employed with singular imagination and effectiveness. The percentage of losses on R. A. F. raids has actually gone down in recent weeks. The losses of the American Eighth Air Force on its daylight precision raids, on the other hand, have mounted. However, there is little doubt that we can still afford the price exacted. With most of its forces tied up elsewhere Germany continues to be in a singularly unfavorable position to meet air attack. The constant pounding has certainly weakened German industry and eased the path of invasion. We should be on our guard, however, against expecting miracles from the air war. A large amount of German industry has yet to be bombed, and the repeated raids on Essen, Cologne, Emden, and other targets are admissions that some of the earlier attacks did less damage than was thought.

The Italian campaign continues to get the headlines, but it does not deserve them. The Germans have made no real attempt to defeat the Allied forces since they failed to do so at Salerno. Instead, they have waged a very successful delaying action, aided greatly by mountainous terrain and heavy rains. Both sides have fought cautiously and refrained from committing themselves too deeply, and neither has recently been guilty of many mistakes.

As the United States enters its third year of war there are many portents of success. The United Nations have moved far along the path to victory and are justifiably confident. But the war has not yet been won. Final triumph waits at the end of a long and bloody road.

Diary of the Future

BY VERNON BARTLETT

[*This is the concluding instalment of "a cautionary tale . . . a rash attempt to write history before it has happened," by a distinguished British journalist and member of Parliament. In the preceding issue Mr. Bartlett outlined some of the problems with which the various commissions of the Washington Peace Conference were engaged.*]

VII. The International Police Force

NOVEMBER 4. Several days of sensation and bad temper. The Armaments Commission has been meeting in even more somber secrecy than the other commissions. It has been able to use the argument that since the war against Japan is still on, secrecy is necessary for reasons of security. The reply to that one is that no plan for the general control of armaments, as against the unilateral and perpetual disarmament of an aggressor state, is likely to encourage the Japanese to fight with greater vigor or to give them valuable military information. Then the secrecy merchants trotted out the argument that all the conference needed to do was to regulate the disarmament of Germany and the other European aggressors, to which the reply is that the methods used for preventing Germany from ever making war against us must fit into the general pattern.

The Czechoslovak delegation had taken the lead in preparing a scheme for an international air police (*cf.* diary, September 17) and had won for it widespread support among the smaller European nations. Very correctly they had kept it secret until they could obtain the commission's agreement to its publication. There was a row last Tuesday because that agreement was not forthcoming, despite their argument that no international police would ever be established until public opinion had

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had time to accustom itself to the idea. It was known that the opposition to publication came mainly from the British and Americans.

Then, on Thursday morning, Iverach Macdonald was able to send a very complete summary of the scheme to the *Times* of London and Drew Middleton an equally complete one to the *Times* of New York. Everybody accused everybody else of bad faith. Where the news came from I don't know, except that Iverach tells me he did not get his story from the Czechs themselves. Most of us newspapermen got nasty cables from our papers asking why we had been scooped. Ted Montgomery and I each had one from our editor, and in our distress we drank so much rye whiskey with Middleton, who had his success to celebrate, that I woke next morning feeling—in Drew's words—as though a dwarf had walked over my tongue with muddy boots on.

And this morning comes the cable to Anthony Eden signed by a couple of hundred members of Parliament. Their protest that the British delegation is handing over British defenses to foreigners would have been out of date at the end of the last war. In fact, it's even more misleading and deceptive than the warning that came to the Versailles Peace Conference from a roughly similar bunch of members of Parliament. But it has put the fear of the devil into the minds of our delegates.

November 11. This morning's sensation was produced by Victor Gordon-Lennox in the Chicago *Daily News*. General de Gaulle is in one of his Joan of Arc moods, and has told Anthony Eden that he has it in mind to leave the conference and to summon a rival one in Brussels or Paris. He hinted—according to Victor's story—that he had the support of the Russians for a scheme to enable the Europeans to decide their own future without the intervention of non-European states such as the British Commonwealth or the United States. He was particularly bitter that these two great powers should put forward their demands for the control of any international police force at a conference to decide the fate of Germany and Italy and their lesser European allies.

A French colonel, two American majors, and a British civilian had a terrific row at a table near ours in the Mayflower this evening. "Do you realize," Ted Montgomery asked me in the middle of it, "that today is the anniversary of the armistice that ended the last war?"

November 12. Axes are being ground so noisily and so aggressively that the voices of the smaller nations can scarcely be heard. Their first demand is of course accepted by all the delegations—that Germany and Italy shall not be allowed to build or to possess aircraft of any kind for fifteen years and after that time shall be entitled to do so only if the nations change this decision by a four-fifths majority vote. If all airfields everywhere in the world are open to the aircraft of the international air police and the commercial aircraft of all the signatory nations, these two countries will not be able to train pilots even if they are able in some way to get machines. You may be able to hide factories—although it is very doubtful whether you could manufacture so complicated an instrument as an airplane in secret—but you certainly cannot hide an airfield. Since aircraft and air-borne divisions are so vitally important in modern war, this restriction on Germany and Italy should make it unnecessary to maintain large Allied forces of occupation in these two countries.

Therefore the delegations of large and small powers agree on this first demand. They don't on the second, which is that the commander-in-chief and the majority of members of the chief of staff's committee be from the smaller states, so that too much strength shall not be placed in the hands of the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and China. Nor do they agree on the third, which is that members of the international air police should wear no badge to denote the country of their origin. The over-fifties, whose opposition is based on nationalism, are making the most of the argument that this demand is incompatible with the fourth—that except in times of emergency, and particularly in the first few years, an effort should be made to keep a high proportion of members of this force in the country of their origin, so that public opinion will be helped to look upon the international air police as its own police force.

If there is a real row on this, I suppose I shall fly back to London in the hope of taking part in a House of Commons debate. It will be a great tragedy, it seems to me, if we lose this opportunity of starting off a real international force with an international loyalty. It could be done; in the early days of the League of Nations one found a real esprit de corps developing among men of all nationalities in Geneva. On a more limited scale, General Eisenhower achieved it in the Mediterranean. Also we went a long way toward it when men of several nationalities were brigaded together or flew in the same squadrons to fight the Germans. To succeed in this more ambitious scheme we should start with as few outward signs of different nationalities as possible. Some of my colleagues in Parliament are going on a deputation to the Prime Minister to urge this view on him and to try to counteract the effect of the cable from our two hundred other colleagues—confound them!

There is also likely to be a great deal of dispute about the proposal that all aircraft be produced under international license. One of the troubles in the old days was that the small nations depended for their defense on a few great armament manufacturers in a few great countries. This tempted them to set up factories of their own and thus to increase the competition for markets. Also their sense of insecurity made them ready to believe stories about the wicked intentions of their neighbors and inclined to order weapons they couldn't afford. And

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the manufacturers, with the money they received from these poor and nervous little countries, built up bigger and better armaments for use by the great powers.

It seems absurd that we should start this trouble and distrust all over again in the matter of aircraft. The American objection to internationalism is much more comprehensible than the British, since the States have built up such enormous production. On the other hand, the very immensity of it is proving the strongest argument for national, and ultimately international, control.

I have had enough of this. I drafted a cable to my editor asking for permission to come home. Dined alone in an atmosphere of gray misery and drank rye whiskey. The dwarfs with muddy boots on will be active during the night, but I tore the cable up. I suppose one will have to see it through.

November 15. Dined with Harold Nicolson, and we got to talking of the last peace conference and of the way in which so many of its mistakes are being repeated a generation later. He reminded me that we had both written books about it. "Yours was very good," I said. "Yours was very bitter, but not too much so," he replied, "I wonder what sort of books we should write about this one?" I quoted to him a sentence about the last peace conference from his own book, "Why Britain Is at War": "The conference was conducted in an atmosphere of angry and hysterical rush." I left him shortly to go up to my room and to run through the pages of this diary. Here, I thought, was the material for another book about another peace conference. But I was too bitter, too sick at heart, to polish it into a neat volume. Perhaps, even so, my publisher might be interested.

So much for my unlived diary, written now in the hope that I may not have to live it later on. A hundred and fifty years ago Thomas Paine wrote these words, which should still inspire men today: "We have it in our power to begin the world over again." They are more true now than they were when they were written by that extraordinary Anglo-American who was elected to the Convention in Paris during the French Revolution. For now words, arguments, and appeals can encircle the world in a fraction of a second, and oceans have ceased to be obstacles to the spread of ideas.

It is because I believe in our power, the power of ordinary humble men and women, that I have asked you, at a time when we still have to face the nagging anxieties of war, to realize how great an effort we shall have to make even when the war is over. Justice Brandeis said of the men who won American independence that they believed "liberty to be the secret of happiness and courage to be the secret of liberty." Millions of people, by their resistance to tyranny during the last few years, have shown that they share this belief. With so many allies there is no cause to be faint-hearted.

In the Wind

THE ARTICLE Charleston Contra Mundum in the November 20 issue of *The Nation* was roundly denounced by the Charleston press, but curious denizens of the city who wanted to read the article were unable to get it. The newsstands refused to handle that issue of the magazine. . . . Back in January, 1940, when the *Forum* published an article entitled Charleston: The Great Myth, the mayor bought up all newsstand copies.

AN NLRB ELECTION will be held this month by the 1,500 employees of the Corn Exchange Bank Trust Company of New York to determine a collective-bargaining agency. The United Office and Professional Workers of America reports that the bank, which ranks twenty-second in size among the fourteen thousand commercial banks of the country, pays lower wages than any other bank in the city. The election will be the first to be held in a major banking institution. Opinion in Wall Street is that the management will yield gracefully to the inevitable.

FROM AN ARTICLE on the evils of grade labeling in the Dallas *Morning News:* "You apparently haven't minded too much. You thought, 'This is war time. Everything will be all right once we whip Hitler.' But will it? Will you be able to go into a store and say, 'I want some of those good old Del Monte peaches'?"

THE TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION of America hopes that after the war the government will not continue "the present policy of compelling competition among modes of transportation," particularly as there is "a vast over-supply of basic transportation facilities."

FOOD MEN, says *Printers' Ink,* are worried sick over an unpublished study by the FTC showing that the present distributive system tends to inflate prices.

THE BITUMINOUS COAL INSTITUTE, in an advertisement designed to build good-will for the mining industry, offers this explanation of company stores in mining towns: "Company stores were originally started for the convenience of miners, before the days of the automobile."

FESTUNG EUROPA: The French underground movement has issued a handbook giving general instructions in sabotage for the use of men and women being conscripted for forced labor in Germany. . . . The Nazis are taking the doors, windows, woodwork, and radiators from Belgian hotels to repair bombed houses in Germany. . . . The occupation authorities in Prague recently planned a "Day of Czech Youth" to demonstrate the loyalty of youth to the New Order. No Czechs took part in the demonstration.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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How Fascism Came to Argentine

FROM the beginning this section has taken a serious view of the situation created by the coup d'état of Ramirez. To those who look upon this war as just another, greater military struggle, the only important question was whether the new Argentine regime would or would not break with the Axis. Nothing else mattered. That Ramirez was ideologically identified with the Axis, that he would never rupture relations if there were any way to avoid it, did not interest them. Nor did they realize that even if a break were accomplished, it would be only a formal gesture which left untouched the fundamental aspect of the Argentine problem—the existence in the greatest country in South America of a fascist dictatorship, born at the very time when fascism was being defeated on every battlefield.

I have declared a hundred times that the only way to win this war for democracy, to assure collective democratic security, is to establish firmly the principle that the survival of a single fascist state in Europe, in Asia, or in America is a menace to the rest of the world and as such intolerable.

Full understanding of the gravity of the Argentine situation cannot be obtained from isolated news items or comments in the daily press. The threat implied by the existence of the Ramirez regime can be measured only if the present circumstances are placed in their historical context, if the incidental is separated from what is a natural consequence of the past. As in every country of Latin America, the middle class in Argentina has never had enough organized strength to thwart the repeated attempts of military cliques to gain control of the government. The Partido Radical, considered the strongest party in the country, ruled for fifteen years without a clear political line, much less an economic or social program. Its outstanding figure, Irigoyen, President of Argentina from 1916 to 1922, was brought back to the presidency in 1928 by an impressive majority at the polls. He was a myth; not much of a ruler. I visited him in 1922 in my capacity as delegate of the Nansen Mission, which helped fight the famine in the Ukraine. He impressed me as a generous and well-meaning man. But neither he nor his party, at that time or later, was able to evolve a program based on anything more solid than an inarticulate desire for freedom.

In 1930, therefore, General Uriburu and his officers found it an easy matter to put an end to fifteen years of Radical administration. But if Radicalism had failed to define a program, the military men who took its place had nothing more constructive to offer. Moreover, they lacked the popular appeal which characterized Irigoyen and explained his large following. A few months of Uriburu's dictatorship were enough to reinstate the Radicals in public favor. The Argentine masses could not reconcile themselves to the abandonment of constitutional methods. They rallied around the three anti-dictatorship parties—the Partido Demócrata-Progresista, the Partido Radical, and the Partido Socialista. And the strong men of the government, forced by the opposition to institute elections, adopted every device of corruption to prevent a genuine expression of the people's will. Since 1930, whatever may have been believed in the United States, Argentina has had no truly representative government.

On this ground, fertilized by thirteen years of arbitrary rule, the colonels established their government in June, 1943. That is what makes their presence in the Casa Rosada so grave. It is not a mere temporary reflection of fascism. It is fascism with a past, with deep roots, growing out of a period during which the people's franchise was never honored but always falsified and twisted to suit the will of the powerful.

The war has played into the hands of the colonels. Their most ardent supporters, the landowners and the big cattle-raisers, are interested only in profiting from this war as they profited from the last, when they sold their products to both camps at fabulous prices. The importance of the role of the cattle-raisers and landowners in the political life of Argentina may not be fully appreciated in the United States. Or the role of the cattle. It is more than thirty years since the last census of human beings was taken in Argentina. But every year a detailed estimate of livestock is published. We don't know how large the Argentine population is today, but we do know that in 1942 Argentina counted more than thirty-one million head of beef cattle, fifty million head of sheep, five million head of pork, seven million horses, and three million goats. The land which produces the excellent Argentine meat and cereals is vast, but it is owned by a few thousand families. Millions of people live in miserable circumstances, barely able to obtain their livelihood. Certainly it is not difficult for the landowners to play a decisive role in any major Argentine crisis. Today they want neutrality and no idle chatter about the century of the common man.

The disparity between the activity of the Axis and that of the democracies in Argentina also helps the colonels. The Axis is energetic, dynamic; it has enlisted the sup-

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port of the Spanish Phalanx and the Spanish clergy in its machinations. As late as December 12 a cable from Lisbon reported the departure of forty Spanish priests for Buenos Aires. In contrast, the democracies are weak and hesitating. Americans and British vie with each other in trying to establish a firm hold on Argentina for the period following the war. The office of the Coordinator of Latin American Affairs publishes a magazine, *En Guardia,* which every liberal Argentine considers an insult to his intelligence. Allied diplomacy flirts now with one Latin American dictator, now with another. American universities welcome the opportunity to confer honorary degrees on tyrants, great or small. If Ramirez would only break with the Axis, they would gladly make him a Doctor of Laws—even though he is destroying the universities in Argentina. All these errors and contradictions are effectively used by Axis agents to discredit democracy.

The Ramirez coup d'état cannot be interpreted as anything so dignified as a revolution, despite Colonel Perón's easy use of the arrogant and pompous phraseology of National Socialism. The overturn of June 4 was not a revolution but a *cuartelazo,* a military coup. Even the entrance of the "G. O. U.," the conspiratorial group which brought Ramirez to power (the initials stand for "Government, Order, Unity"), was no innovation. Secret cells have always existed in the Argentine army. The only novelty is the extreme and clearly defined fascist tendency of the G. O. U.

The growing strength of Argentine fascism has not, however, eliminated internal weakness and confusion. The coup d'état was achieved without previous consultation with the army and without the support of the navy, which continues to be hostile to Ramirez. The coup was a child of the city of Buenos Aires, in whose vicinity lies the Campo de Mayo, the traditional gathering place for regiments which perform the *cuartelazo.* Since its inception the movement has lacked a chief with prestige. The previous public record of General Ramirez was confined to a broadcast to Brazil which praised the *Estado Novo* of Getulio Vargas. The movement was born without a program, basing its appeal on a few commonplace and rhetorical slogans against the corrupt administration of the Castillo regime and a few ambiguous words about the "fulfilment of the continental pacts." The widespread hatred of Castillo made the denunciation of his administration very palatable to the masses. And in their desire to see Argentina end its unpleasant isolation, the Allied embassies took his reference to the "continental pacts" as a happy sign that Ramirez intended to break with the Axis. Those two facts explain the popular acclaim accorded Ramirez in his first days of power and the speed with which the United States recognized his government, against the advice of trustworthy pro-Allied elements in Argentina.

For about six months the colonels succeeded in concealing growing differences in their own ranks and between themselves and the army. But now the disunity has become apparent, and measures have had to be taken to alleviate it. To begin with, the colonels' government has been reduced to three effective members. The triumvirate has been formed outside the Cabinet because, in one respect at least, Ramirez respects the constitution. That document limits the Cabinet to eight members. And so, when the new Department of Labor was created, Juan Perón, Ramirez's right-hand man, was necessarily appointed Under Secretary instead of Secretary. The power of government is concentrated in the hands of Perón, Enrique González, Secretary of the Presidency, and Emilio Ramirez, Chief of Police. Each one tries to extend his control at the cost of the others.

Drawing by Luis Quintanilla

Colonel Perón

González fancies himself as a Goebbels, and under his direction a true Ministry of Propaganda has been installed, in the image of the one set up in 1933 by the shrewd and malignant Nazi. It already controls the press, the radio, book publishing, the theater, the movies.

Lieutenant Colonel Hector J. Ladvocat, Under Secretary in charge of press relations, has made it clear that no editor can fool with the colonels. Now and then the great papers, which for years were the pride of all Argentines, still allow themselves the satisfaction of publishing an editorial praising freedom and reaffirming their solidarity with the United Nations. But they measure every word, and no reference is ever found in the Argentine press to persons whom

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the police arrest in the night and abduct from the capital.

One of the functions of the new department is to "cooperate" with the foreign correspondents in Buenos Aires to make certain that no news goes out from Argentina inimical to the "national interest." This determination to control the news may arise from a desire to conceal the efforts the dictatorship is making to extend its influence throughout South America by creating a strong military bloc under Argentine leadership. The plan is very ambitious, and in the minds of its mysterious promoters it includes Paraguay, Bolivia, Chile, and Peru. I say "mysterious" because the best observers in Buenos Aires begin to think that some hand which is not that of Ramirez directs the plot. But whoever directs it, the idea behind it is clearly of Nazi origin. It can be summarized as follows: As a consequence of the concessions which, for military reasons, the United States and Great Britain are obliged to make to Russia, the Soviet Union will emerge from the war as the strongest political power among the Allies. The United States and Great Britain may perhaps have found a way to avoid bolshevization. But if these five countries of South America remain separated, or if they rely solely upon the protection of the United States, they will be the object of a powerful Communist penetration. The only way to avoid this is by the creation of "strong" governments in each country, composed, of course, of colonels and generals, and dependent upon Argentina for political and military guidance. Together they may successfully resist the Communist plague.

It is in relation to this plan that one must consider the picturesque details of the current visit to Argentina of the dictator of Paraguay, General Morinigo, who has been received in Buenos Aires with unprecedented pomp, reminiscent of the reception given the heads of the small satellite states by Hitler before the war. Indeed, the Hitlerian aspect of the new regime strikes even the visitor. I talked the other day with an American business man who had just returned from Buenos Aires. He is connected with the film industry and spent many years in Europe. "How would you define Argentina today?" I asked him. He said, "Germany in 1933."

Juan Perón, the most capable and audacious member of the triumvirate, tries to manipulate the working class through the newly created Department of Labor, combining demagogic promises with repression, inviting minor labor leaders to his office while suppressing the two strongest unions in Argentina, the Unión Ferroviaria and the Fraternidad. Perón is undoubtedly the driving force in the regime, but even his motor occasionally fails. He did not reveal himself as a very clever statesman in his recent interview with the *Mercurio de Chile*, later reprinted in the *Prensa* of Buenos Aires, which created a new storm after the one that followed the exchange of letters between Foreign Secretary Storni and Mr. Hull. Perón declared that he had on his desk the pledge of fealty of more than 2,500 army officers, ready to forfeit their careers, if necessary, to thwart any attempt to oust Ramirez from power. Perón's statement had a dual purpose. On the one hand, he wanted to show that he was the real boss. On the other, he wanted to present Ramirez outside Argentina not as he is in reality—a prisoner of the colonels—but as the genuine head of the army. The immediate reaction in army circles forced Perón to publish hasty explanations which did little to increase his prestige. Perón may be a potential Führer. But in his attempt to grasp at power he may also provoke the envy and opposition of his colleagues.

The one solution of the present Argentine crisis that would accord with the interests of the Argentine people and of the United Nations is that proposed by the Socialist Party of Argentina at its last congress in October, 1942. It called for the union of all anti-fascist forces in the country, without exclusions or limitations. Only a government emerging from such an alliance and formed by men with a solid reputation for honesty and consistency can put an end to the regime of the colonels without risking the substitution of one dictatorship for another. Only such a government can make a clean break with Germany and Japan and incorporate Argentina in the anti-Axis coalition.

J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO

Political War in Bulgaria

THE British Broadcasting Company's European Service, supervised by the British army's Board of Political Warfare, has entered upon what appears to be a major campaign in a war of nerves against Bulgaria. The first big guns were fired immediately after the bombing of Sofia on December 10. The Bulgarian Parliament was in session at the time, and American planes are said to have dropped leaflets urging the Bulgarians to force their government to get out of the war. The B. B. C. followed this up with similar appeals.

The British broadcasts point to Marshal Tito's Partisan army as an example to patriots who want to implement their anti-Nazi views. "The Bulgarian people know," they say, "that the Yugoslav National Liberation Movement, which numbers Macedonians and Bulgarians among its armed forces, and which has in its program the elimination of racial domination and chauvinistic irredentism, can be no enemy of theirs. And there can be no doubt that the anti-Nazi popular forces in Bulgaria have been greatly strengthened by the Allied attitude toward their fellow anti-Nazis. . . . It remains to be seen whether the Bulgarian people and army have the courage . . . to save themselves from the dishonor and disaster of going down to defeat as an ally of Germany."

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After the Cairo conference of Roosevelt, Churchill, and Inönu, London let Bulgaria know that Turkey is taking an increasingly unfriendly attitude toward Hitler's Balkan satellites. The Ankara correspondent of the London *Times* then reported that "up to one year ago, the Bulgarians would have fought gladly against the Turks with the hope of conquering eastern Thrace and Istanbul. Now, however, they seem to be in a much more sober mood, and, in fact, they went out of their way recently to give warm demonstrations of friendship for Turkey." London implies that Turkey might serve as intermediary between Bulgaria and the United Nations.

It is doubtful whether this war of nerves has as yet had any real effect upon the Bulgarian government. There seems to be a major Cabinet crisis at the present time, but the pro-Russian sympathies of the people have made Cabinet shake-ups a fairly normal occurrence in Bulgaria for the past two years, particularly since the death of the iron-fisted King Boris. Recent reports of Bulgarian peace feelers must be taken with reserve. They seem to come from the same sources which reported the resignation of Premier Bojilov on a day when he and all his ministers were touring the country in a frantic effort to enlist support for the government.

If Turkey enters the war, Bulgaria will be between the Turkish army and Marshal Tito's army. Its capitulation would naturally expedite our advance into Central Europe. Under the present pro-German political and military leadership of the country, an immediate Bulgarian collapse cannot be expected, but the United Nations are bolstering internal forces which may be able to bring it about when the Balkan invasion begins.

Behind the Enemy Line

BY ARGUS

WHAT books are read in Germany today? An answer as significant as it is authoritative is found in the Finnish newspaper *Hufvudstadsbladet* of November 15. The newspaper interviewed the general secretary of the so-called Association of European Authors, one of the institutions of the Nazi "New European Order," and this gentleman, Herr Dr. Carl Rothe of Berlin, gave out some surprising information.

First he made it clear what kind of books Germans are not reading today. Books which have anything to do with the war are "completely neglected" by both buyers and readers. This is because the war makes itself felt in every sector of daily life, and the public does not wish to be reminded of it also in books. What people do read was a more interesting revelation. They are reading the classics, and among these their favorite is the poet Friedrich Hölderlin, who composed his poems and his one novel some 150 years ago. Hölderlin's works are having a "sensational revival throughout Germany." "They are being very widely read."

Their present popularity is indeed sensational, for as persons with a knowledge of German literature will recall, Hölderlin sought refuge from the turmoil of war and revolution in the early 1800's through a flight into antiquity, into Hellenism. He was the first of those brilliant German intellects who bitterly hated their own country. Hölderlin called the Germans "calculating barbarians." "I tell you there is nothing so sacred that these people do not desecrate and debase it." "The virtues of the Germans are but a brilliant curse"—and so on. To quote Stefan Zweig, he poured forth "the fiercest maledictions a German had ever hurled at his own people." And now we hear from a Nazi source that in the fifth year of the war this author is enjoying a "sensational revival" in Germany!

One of the riddles of the war is how cities that have been destroyed from the air continue to exist. Even in Berlin, which has been at most 30 per cent destroyed, the stubbornness with which life goes on is astonishing. "People simply dig in somehow in the ruins," says a report to the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. But Berlin is not yet in the same class as Hamburg. In the *Dagens Nyheter* of November 27 a Swede who has seen both cities compares them: "In Hamburg," he says, "the destruction amounts to 70 or 80 per cent. Conditions are indescribable. One can drive for half an hour in the heart of the city without seeing a house standing." And yet this did not mean the death of the city. "Despite everything, the inhabitants are returning. Nearly a million are back already, food distribution continues as usual, and traffic has been resumed." Why do they return? Why do the authorities make the effort to bring them back? How do these million people who have found lodging in the ruins gain their livelihood?

A considerable number of the inhabitants refuse to live like ghosts in a dead city. The *Nya Daglight Allehanda* of November 27 speaks of an extensive new phenomenon—persons who vanish without leaving a trace:

> Workers are forbidden to leave Berlin under any circumstances; they are ordered to report at their place of work after each raid. But many disobey this order. A hundred thousand persons are registered as missing today in Germany. They left their home town after a raid and are living somewhere in the country, paying no attention to the constant appeals to them to return. Despite heavy penalties the number of workers in hiding is increasing constantly, and will be further swelled by the Berlin raids.

I might add that it is not easy, unless one has numerous accomplices, to hide in a country which has strict food rationing.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

In Memoriam Stratton Christensen

Laughing young man and fiercest against sham
Then you have stayed at sea, at feckless sea,
With a single angry curiosity
Savoring fear and faith and speckled foam?
A salt end to what was sweet begun:
Twenty-three years and your integrity
And already a certain number touched like me
With a humor and a hardness from the sun.

Without laughter we have spent your wit
In an unwitnessed fight at sea, perhaps not won,
And whether wisely we shall never know;
But like Milton's friend's, to them that hear of it,
Your death is a puzzler that will tease them on
Reckless out on the thin, important floe.

WILLIAM MEREDITH

Seurat, Science, and Art

GEORGES SEURAT. By John Rewald. Translated by Lionel Abel. Wittenborn and Company. $6.

THE mystery of intuition must be taken for granted in aesthetic experience. The calculation that lies under the maker's activity seems at times more mysterious than the intuition. This is nothing new. Originally, the operations of reason were in the charge of priests—the first geometry, the Pythagorean pseudo-science of numbers, and magic. The hieratic tone of Seurat's art and of his personality was a concomitant of his effort to reduce or expand painting into a rational method. He had a system; the artist who professes that the role of his genius is to apply a system rather than create originally comes as one armed with secrets. It is implied that we can all become artists in the same way as we can all be saved by true faith. This means in effect the socialization of art, as Protestantism by making every man his own priest meant the socialization of religion. The temple of the artist's genius is broken into and its sanctities made common property. Seurat was not the first to have this idea, but he was the first to invoke the aid of the natural sciences. Not that he proposed really to socialize art; he was jealous of his "discoveries" and exploited them privately, or wanted to, like a good capitalist. And he realized quite well the gap between a system and its application. He never bothered to answer the critics who charged him with attempting to eliminate the role of original talent.

The impressionists tended also to make painting scientific, but Seurat was the first to seize the full implications. He was one of those fanatics whose mission it is to realize and fulfil immediately what others have only groped toward. He found nothing that can be called a solution, but by drawing the logical conclusions he exhausted the question. It has not been raised again except by crackpots.

Seurat's enterprise, no less than Zola's delusions about scientific novel-writing, involved really the general purification of the arts undertaken by the French avant-garde after the decline of romanticism. Hitherto the practical theories of painting had been concerned chiefly with the reproduction of nature. Seurat's interest was to secure for painting most economically and expeditiously the maximum of the effects proper to it as a two-dimensional art imprisoned on a plane surface. Scientific method exemplified a way of eliminating irrelevant factors from a problem. With such precedent in mind, Seurat unwittingly arrived at the notion of pure painting *überhaupt*. He himself seems not to have recognized it, but it was there, in his practice and in his theory. The emphasis of his system lay mostly upon the abstract elements of painting—tone, color, mass, line. He was the first to take the frame into account as part of the picture and to insist on indicating it by painting a border within the picture itself, and he was thus the first to attack the concept of the easel painting as a window.

Seurat was concerned above all with formulating a theory of color and tone; yet his own painting excels by the inviolable order and mathematical calm of its arrangements of line and mass, especially in the landscapes. And toward the last such pictures as "Le Chahut" and "Le Cirque" show abstruse and dazzling counterpoints and harmonies of contour. But color and surface remain unsatisfactory. They make a shimmering, variegated mist which contour and mass have to break through; *pointilliste* color does not inhere in or define form; surface is paper-thin and translucent, ready to be peeled away. It vibrates outward only—but in this it foreshadows some of the effects that post-cubism aimed at: surface and texture as elements which spring toward the spectator instead of drawing his eyes on into the depths of the picture.

For the "inhumanity" of which modern art has been accused we can blame history, but Seurat was one of the principal channels by which it entered painting. In this his subject matter played almost as great a part as his theory and technique. Like Manet, Toulouse-Lautrec, Renoir, and other contemporaries, he was fascinated by the mass-produced recreations of city life which the nineteenth century had conventionalized into circuses, night clubs, dance halls, cafes, and variety theaters. Seurat seems to have been sensitive to the outside-looking-in attitude that modern entertainment forces upon the spectator. More than the entertainment itself, the inhuman glamour of the entertainers keeps us at a distance. Both the entertainers and the spectators in "Le Chahut" and "Le Cirque" are cartooned; their faces and bodies are part of a weird, alienating humor that speaks from every diagonal, vertical, horizontal, and curved line. See how the forked coat-tails of the man dancer in "Le Chahut" echo his moustache, the bows on the slipper of the girl next to him, her fixed smile, and the smirk on the

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face of the single visible spectator. It is a world most of us will never enter. Twenty years after Seurat, painting entered a world not unlike it and left a good many of us standing outside.

The objectivity, coolness, and carefulness of research in Mr. Rewald's monograph show how facts about art should be presented. I think it unfortunate, however, that he limited his intention so strictly. "This study," he writes, "is limited to an account of Seurat's life, of the process by which his ideals—and paralleling them, his works—developed, and of the reception accorded them. . . . It is for others to study Seurat's place in the history of art or to analyze his paintings." This disclaimer does not excuse a certain sketchiness, even as to the facts. We gather that Seurat never had to work for a living. What sort of income did he have then? A small point, but it has its own importance. I think too that the exemplifications of Seurat's theories in his work could have been examined in more detail. And as a matter of editing, the locations of the works reproduced—all in black and white—should have been given. The translation by Lionel Abel from Mr. Rewald's French is remarkably smooth.

CLEMENT GREENBERG

John Applegate

MAINSTREAM. By Hamilton Basso. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.

LIKE James Truslow Adams, Hamilton Basso is in quest of "the American." But, of a more critical turn of mind, he is more fully aware that "the American character" is "an ideal figment," shaped by "that other ideal figment we call the American tradition." "It is impossible," he asserts, to strike an average or a norm. The happier inspiration would be not to try."

Yet Hamilton Basso tells us in the next sentence that we must speak of that myth. I wonder why. When astrology was discovered to be a myth, a working hypothesis that utterly refused to work, the proper method was to discard it altogether. Myths are not harmless, and the myth of "a national character" is the most dangerous of all. It leads to hundred-per-centism, which leads to totalitarianism, which leads to "My country, right or wrong!" which leads to eternal damnation.

I do not deny that there are "Americanisms." You can, as a rule, tell an American abroad at first sight or hearing. These traits or tricks are of the surface only: they are phonetic, sartorial, and tonsorial rather than spiritual. What we express in the American idiom are human thoughts and passions. The modifiers are period, faith, education, social standing, rather than the abstraction called "national character."

To trot out again a weary but convenient phrase, I agree with Hamilton Basso better than he agrees with himself: it should not be done. But I agree with him, presumably, on a second point: he has done it very well. He takes a John Doe whom he calls John Applegate: corner druggist in a middle-sized town of the Middle West; middle class, middle-aged, and wearing medium-weight underwear. And he wonders what characters in American tradition or folklore have left their imprint on this John Applegate. The list includes Cotton Mather, John Smith, Jefferson, Calhoun, Lincoln, Carnegie, Barnum, Henry Adams, Bryan, Teddy Roosevelt, Huey Long, and F. D. R.

A strangely assorted Pantheon. We miss Benjamin Franklin, Washington, Jackson, John Brown, and perhaps Robert E. Lee, far more of a national legend than U. S. Grant. On the other hand, we wonder whether John Applegate ever was conscious of Cotton Mather, Calhoun, and Henry Adams. There is some uncertainty about the method. Are the heroes of this book presented as individuals, as "representative men," or as "myths"? Only incoherent metaphors can express our delighted bewilderment. The author shoots at an impalpable quarry with protean weapons. He bids us to an Alice in Wonderland croquet game. The book is singularly vivid in tone; intellectually it is a dance of ghosts in the mist at midnight. So let us sweep aside the thesis and treat each sketch as an independent essay. In that light the work becomes of commanding interest. For every one of the men studied presents a unique problem, at times historical, at times psychological; and the problems are, if not solved, at any rate stated with a clarity which is an intellectual joy. Nor do these ten studies lack unity. Only the link between them is not the mythical and lackluster John Applegate, but Hamilton Basso—a decided gain.

Perhaps the best pieces are the portrait of Carnegie—a perfect Horatio Alger success story—and that of P. T. Barnum, "the educator." That term applied to the Greatest Showman on Earth may sound strange until we reflect that evangelizing, education, and advertising are fundamentally the same process—inducing the public to get what it does not want. This, by the way, is the essence of the democratic way of life. The alternative is the doctrine of the absolutists, in religion, art, politics: those in sole possession of the truth have the right, not to preach, but to impose the truth.

Barnum is, of course, "Americanism" pure and undefiled. No other country offers so brilliant a combination of devouring energy and blatant cheerfulness. In the world's mythology Barnum is the god of advertising. But that glorious eminence is due solely to his obviousness. There were greater Barnums than he; only they were more artfully camouflaged. There was a bespangled Barnum in the incredible Marquis de la Pailleterie, alias Alexandre Dumas. There was a second-rate Wagnerian Barnum in William II —and a Barnum in excelsis in Wagner himself. I have attempted to show the part played by the circus element in the Napoleonic legend. If Balzac had had his chance, he would have been Barnum—or Napoleon. The perfect Barnum, infinitely more subtle than our P. T., was Beaumarchais, one of the forgotten founders of this republic. And because Disraeli was a supreme Barnum, England is most reluctant to give up the pomp and circumstance of empire, complete with caparisoned elephants, diamond-studded maharajahs, and durbars of breath-taking gorgeousness.

Let us forget John Applegate. Here are ten conversations with Hamilton Basso, on all the problems which have been vexing us for the last two centuries, and will vex us to the end of time. The book provides unrationed food for thought, and entertainment with a most reasonable price ceiling. In other words, it is a rare bargain. ALBERT GUERARD

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Champion of Zionism

THE FORGOTTEN ALLY. By Pierre van Paassen. The Dial Press. $2.75.

IT WOULD be difficult to find a more doughty champion of any cause than Pierre van Paassen. His sense of justice is all-embracing, so that he serves many a cause. Like most of us he wields a single weapon. His weapon happens to be a very broad sword and not a rapier.

It is no reflection upon van Paassen to suggest that he has but a single weapon, for the weapon happens to be a good one. Van Paassen writes in the white heat of passion and brings the rich experience of a long journalistic life in many corners of the world to bear upon the issue which he is arguing. His books abound in anecdotes, vivid illustrations, personal confessions of the motives which prompt him to espouse the particular issue which engages him, and personal denunciations of those who oppose his cause. The books are discursive and not too logical in their development. They are for all that, or perhaps because of that, extremely effective instruments of his purpose.

His most recent book was inevitable, for van Paassen has been, for a long time, the most effective Gentile champion of the Zionist answer to the Jewish problem. In this book he brings all his polemical skill to bear upon this issue. He denounces the Jewish leaders who imagine that a "nationalist" answer to a great issue is too low to engage their conscience, and who do not understand the difficulty of rising beyond nationalism for a people denied the basic security of national existence. He tells some rather effective stories of European Jews who imagined themselves secure in their assimilation and discovered too late that their security was an illusion. To support his various subordinate themes he regales us with other stories of the heroism of Jewish soldiers in the armies of the Allies and of the duplicity of Arab chieftains and politicians.

This mass of rather diffuse journalistic material is held together by a central thesis. It is that Britain, and to a lesser extent the allies of Britain, are appeasing an essentially unreliable Arab world while betraying the absolute loyalty of the Jewish community in Palestine. He is convinced that the enmity of the Arab world toward the Jews in Palestine has been largely, if not wholly, created by the "divide-and-conquer" technique of British imperialism, and that the British encourage this Arab hostility by a specious display of objectivity and impartiality.

I doubt whether van Paassen does full justice to the complexities of the imperial task in the Mediterranean world; and some of his charges may be too extravagant. But he makes a convincing case for his main thesis. Britain is tender with its dubious allies, precisely because they are dubious, and also because they are involved in its Indian dilemma through the Mohammedanism which partially unites the Arab with the Indian world. The Jews are unable to bargain as the Arabs do, just because they can have no alternative loyalty. This is one among many reasons why Britain alone will not be able to do justice to Palestine. Since American Jewry has become the most powerful single force in the Jewish world community, this is also a good reason why America should become organically and intimately related to the solution of this problem. Our military power in that part of the world has developed more recently than the British, but it is not less potent. Our stakes in Palestine are different from the British stakes, but not less important. Our embarrassments in dealing with the issue are less. That can make for irresponsibility; but if rightly handled it could contribute to a more creative settlement of the issue.

The critical reader may occasionally wish that van Paassen were a little less passionate and more discriminating. Yet the complacency of the non-Jewish world toward the tragic problem which the Jews face is so great that someone must speak with a loud voice. Sometimes his passion betrays him into an absurdity. He declares, for instance, that if only Roosevelt and Churchill threatened reprisals against the German policy of destroying the Jews it would bring results. He writes, "If the Führer should announce that he is going to make Europe *Bulgarenrein*—and if the governments of Britain and the U. S. A. warned him that for every Bulgarian slain they would exact ten German lives, the Nazis, I am sure, would desist at once." Van Paassen understands the Nazi terror, and he cannot really believe such a statement. It is made because he rightly feels that more support should be given to the Jews.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

The Detroit Riot

RACE RIOT. By Alfred McClung Lee and Norman Daymond Humphrey. The Dryden Press. $1.50.

LIKE both the trivial and important happenings that provide "news" for our rapidly changing urban civilization and are soon forgotten, the Detroit riot of six months ago has become an incident in the history of race relations in America. But the conditions which were responsible for that tragic outbreak have not ceased to exist. This little book, written by two sociologists one of whom was assaulted by a mob when he attempted to save the life of a Negro youth, is a dramatic and at the same time a scientific account of the human passions and the social forces that make possible such racial clashes in our American cities.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part shows in a vivid manner the role of demagogues who play upon nervous tensions and prejudices in race riots, and the costs of rioting in terms of individual insecurity, the cessation of forward-looking movements, and the degradation of democracy. The six chapters of the second part contain a well-documented chronological account of the riot, a description of the manner in which it was handled, an analysis of its social and economic causes, and a comparison with the outbreaks in Los Angeles and Harlem. Unlike most studies of such happenings, this book includes in the third part an account of symptoms that presage the advent of race riots and a program of action to avoid anticipated outbreaks.

This small volume is not only informative; its authors understand what they are talking about. It should be read not only by government officials and others who have the responsibility for maintaining order but by everyone who is interested in maintaining a democratic way of life in America.

E. FRANKLIN FRAZIER

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DRAMA

THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE" (Morosco Theater) is a pleasant little comedy with an excellent cast of three, amusing dialogue, and an ingenious single set which shows three rooms at once—living-room, bedroom, and kitchen—like a child's playhouse open on one side. Margaret Sullavan is the romantic young actress who has had two affairs and has lost faith in love. Elliott Nugent is the matter-of-fact American young man, an army sergeant, who restores her faith by the end of the play. Audrey Christie is the disillusioned trouper who is still romantic at heart.

Miss Sullavan is too darned adorable at times, and it is hard to believe that the sergeant, as Nugent depicts him, has ever been a playboy in Paris—his similarity to the professor in "The Male Animal" is also a bit unsettling. Miss Christie is right. The three of them play well together and keep the slight piece moving smoothly.

The only "significant" thing about John Van Druten's bit of froth is its resemblance to a movie. One has the impression not of seeing a play but of watching a film—in this case one of those light, smart, sentimental films which Hollywood does often and does well. In such a film the characters are well-groomed stereotypes—no matter how lowly the heroine may be, she wears the very smartest clothes and her living conditions are elegant. The dialogue is amusing and clever and sounds as if it were written by the yard. The plot is the one about boy meets girl. The desired effect is the illusion of a daydream, not of reality. Entertainment, not catharsis, is the objective, and to hell with Aristotle.

Every element of the patented Hollywood daydream is present in "The Voice of the Turtle," which with a few concessions to the Hays office can be made into a very successful film. The heroine is the adorable child-female that all women are presumed to dream of being. Elliott Nugent is the gruff protecting male. Miss Christie is the battered woman of the world who throws in racy lines but who would also like to be an adorable child-female. It is all pretty adolescent. And dramatically too it is a study in arrested development: the characters do not grow at all, let alone up; the theme, if any, is still-born; and there is really no climax, only a clinch.

I enjoy the light Hollywood film, and I enjoyed "The Voice of the Turtle." But the film industry manufactures an adequate supply of daydreams, and I hope the theater isn't going in for them on a large scale. The occasional purge of a good adult play, comedy or otherwise, wouldn't do any of us a bit of harm. And that goes for actors as well as audiences. I for one should like to see Margaret Sullavan in such a play, because I think she has the makings of a good actress. In her present role she makes a few valiant attempts to turn a type into a character, but she doesn't get much help from the script and falls back on prettiness and charm. She possesses a great deal of both—so much, indeed, that if she wants to be a legitimate actress with more than one role in her repertory rather than a stereotyped star in the streamlined Hollywood daydream—at daydream money—she had better watch out.

MARGARET MARSHALL

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Subject India *By H. N. Brailsford* $2.50

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Monkey *By Wu Ch'êng-ên* $2.75

The Machiavellians *By James Burnham* $2.50

America, Russia, and the Communist Party *By John L. Childs and George S. Counts* $1.25

The first four of the above titles were also selected by *The New Republic* for its list of "Notable Books: 1943."

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RECENTLY PUBLISHED

Target: Germany. The Army Air Forces' Official Story of the VIII Bomber Command's First Year Over Europe. Simon and Schuster with *Life*. $1, paper; $2, cloth.

The Flower Drum and Other Chinese Songs. By Chin-Hsin Yao Chen and Shih-Hsiang Chen. Foreword by Pearl Buck. Preface by Henry Cowell. John Day. $2.50.

Young America's Aviation Annual, 1944. Edited by David C. Cooke. McBride. $2.50.

The Story of Painting from Cave Pictures to Modern Art. By Thomas Craven. Simon and Schuster. $5.

Cartoon Cavalcade. Edited by Thomas Craven. Simon and Schuster. $3.95.

Last Flight from Singapore. By Arthur G. Donahue, D. F. C., Flight Lieutenant, R. A. F. Macmillan. $2.50.

Man's Food, Its Rhyme or Reason. By Mark Braubard. Macmillan. $2.50.

The Mailed Fist, 1864-1939: The Background of Hitlerism. By S. L. G. Knox. Friends of Democracy.

New Goals for Old Age. Edited by George Lawton. Columbia. $2.75.

A Soldier's Reader. Edited by George Macy. Heritage Press. $2.95.

Military Psychology. By Norman C. Meier. Harper. $3.

Pan American Economics. By Paul R. Olson and C. Addison Hickman. Wiley. $4.50.

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Postwar Reemployment: The Magnitude of the Problem. By Karl T. Schlotterbeck. Brookings Institution, Washington. 25 cents.

Galaxies. By Harlow Shapley. Blakiston Company, Philadelphia. $2.50.

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Look at Africa. By W. G. and M. S. Woolbert. Foreign Policy Association. 25 cents.

FILMS

Prize Day

A YEAR is ending. It ends our second at war, the fiftieth—or twentieth, as you prefer—in the history of the great recording, communicative, educational, and artistic medium of our time. In another fifty years—or ten, I am willing to bet—moving pictures will no longer be the central medium. Radio will have taken their place; television, very likely, will have taken the place of both.

Let us try to assess what has and has not been done in moving pictures, particularly those made in this country, during the year.

Our only really good films have been our straight record films. Of these, the best have been of war, whose special intensity requires a minimum of intelligence to do fairly well with. Of these, we can still have no idea how much is kept from us or for what good or insufficient reason. Of the material we have seen it is clear that nearly always, when there has been a chance to prepare for the shot through the mind and the mind's eye rather than the eye purely of courage and of the camera, the mind has been painfully inferior to the possibility offered. The presentation invariably has been worse. The prevailing quality has been that of American commercial romanticism, as taught, for example, by the *Life* school.

In Russia, in occasional shots, great records of war have been made. But much is still staged and falsified and rhetorical in the shooting itself, and the editing, still more, has been posterish, opportunistic, and anti-human. In neither camera work nor editing have I seen anything which was not derived, and degraded, from Dziga-Vertov or Eisenstein.

In England warmly casual, humane, mature, cinematically firm films have been made; the most essentially good and perceptive which I have seen from anywhere this year—good enough, and strange enough to us, so that I am not surprised by what amounts to a conspiracy in this country against showing them at all widely. But there is no use thinking too well of these films. "Desert Victory" is unquestionably the best film of the year; but it is the result of a great subject handled rather with thorough cinematic common sense than with cinematic creative energy. Humphrey Jennings's "Listen to Britain" so uses the one first-rate creative idea of the year that after making a few clear—and several fuddled—statements the idea apologizes and limps out quietly by the back way.

In this country the spectators are treated as fools, more often than not by other fools. Or call them misled. The proof is in every commentator's voice, his phrasing, his abject mawkishness and political childishness, and in the puff-paste, onanistic, heartless quality of most of the camera work, whose nearest equivalent is the tradition Leni Riefenstahl froze in Germany. In Russian films people are photographed and appealed to essentially as animals and are treated as human individuals only to force-feed inhuman, anti-individualistic points. In England they are regarded as human individuals, and the jumbled leftish-democratic line accordingly holds more hope; but here too, when creativity is not absent, it is tempered to shorn lambs or is abdicated for equally sorry reasons.

Here, the only films I can feel any

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well-grounded excitement over are the army orientation films. Of these only two out of the six completed have reached the civilian public. Of these the first, "Prelude to War," was treated like a poor relation by most exhibitors, and the second, "The Battle of Russia," was gelded of its already sterile political equipment. "Battle of Russia," next to "Desert Victory," is the best film of the year. But like the other orientation films it is saturated with words and only begins to use the possibilities of the screen, as such, to show and teach. And like all the others it can make you sick to the very soul with its political timidity.

Nearly all of the most talented people in moving pictures work in fiction, and most of the greatest possibilities lie within fiction. The record in fiction is not a happy one.

In disagreement with most qualified people I think more well than ill of "Shadow of a Doubt"; but I must admit that its skill is soft and that it is distinctly below the standard set by Hitchcock's best English work. "The Hard Way" is one of the few films of the year worth seeing again; but seeing it again, group-theatricality, Bette-Davism, and compromise impair even its justly famous first half hour. "The Ox-Bow Incident" I underpraised; it stands in memory very firm, respectable, and sympathetic. But I still think it suffers from *rigor artis*. "The Watch on the Rhine" was a carefully screened play about which, cinematically, I feel little beyond respect for Paul Lukas's beautiful performance. "Casablanca" is still reverently spoken of as (1) fun, (2) a "real movie." I still think it is the year's clearest measure of how willingly, *faute de mieux*, people will deceive themselves. Even "Jeannie," hardly a movie at all, was better fun; or even that affable imitation-of-an-imitation, "Tartu."

As for those pictures in which Hollywood "grew up," or began to pull its weight, I won't waste space even naming them. The solemn, expensive anti-fascist and war dramas like "The Moon Is Down" are just as depressing; even "This Land Is Mine" is just sincerely polished bone. The sterterous underground melodrama "Hangmen Also Die" stands up better than most of them. "The Human Comedy" and "Happy Land" put up the so-called home front in syrup but deserve at least a polite bow each, the first for a few moments of genuine sweetness, the second because, along with "Shadow of a Doubt," "The Hard Way," and some of the RKO shorts, it is photographically the only hopeful work of the year.

The semi-documentaries — such as "Air Force"—learned absolutely nothing of value. All alike they tried to combine hopelessly ill-appreciated primer smatterings of technical realism and studio combat with romanticized men and talk which chemically guaranteed the defeat of all possible reality. The easier, more traditional task of making war melodramas brought "Bataan," "Sahara," and "The Cross of Lorraine." However essentially formularistic they were, and however rectally fed their cinematic, psychological, and political intelligence, they were among the few cinematically alert and pleasing jobs of the year.

In the line of plain "entertainment" there was no indication that anybody realizes that entertainment and artistry are inseparable and virtually synonymous. The musicals I saw gave perhaps twenty seconds of genuine pleasure with each two hours of annihilation. "The More the Merrier" was fair fun until the whole cast began dancing the joke into my ribs. "A Lady Takes a Chance" was amusing when you could see past Jean Arthur's *moues* and the thick snow of Captain Billy's *Whiz-Bang*. I can recommend "Lassie Come Home" to any dog who will check his interest in films in the theater lobby. But if you want simple pleasure you may as well go to another Maisie picture or a Laurel and Hardy or an Abbott and Costello; and even there you have to work for it. I regret my failure, still, to see "Holy Matrimony," which I hear is really good. I wish it well; but I wonder whether Aristophanes himself could alter the balance of this year.

The whole business has been dying here, ten years or more. Last year, it seems to me, was the all-time low—so far.

And a very good New Year to you, too.

JAMES AGEE

Art Note

JOHN MARIN: Oils, Water Colors, and Drawings. At An American Place, through January 9.

For several years now Marin has been seeking to advance his development through oil rather than water color. He is better in oil, I think, than is generally admitted. Yet in this show of his latest work the only oil that comes off at all is "The Three-Masted Schooner," which has a four-square pictorial compactness which is strange to Marin and to which

Harold J. Laski

in

THE *Nation*

WILL Britain's working men and women be willing to go back to their 1939 status when the war is over? If not, what reforms do they have in mind, how do they intend to go about securing them, and what are the chances of success? Will the post-war government be a labor government? If so, will it be aggressive or timid in its efforts to make a better society?

HAROLD J. LASKI, British labor's leading progressive spokesman, will discuss these and other questions in a series of articles for *The Nation* this winter.

Also Coming:

War and the Doctors—two articles on the fight between progressive and reactionary elements in the medical profession. *By J. Mitchell Morse*

Puerto Rico's Problems — Statehood or Independence? *By Justine W. Diffie*

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Post-War Housing—the possibilities of prefabrication. *By Frances Westbrook*

Working Wives — the domestic dilemmas of the professional woman. *By Edith M. Stern*

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the "self-decorated" frame may contribute largely. As for the water colors, vividness is gained from the introduction of a blood red, but there is nothing that expands the notion of Marin's style in the medium. More startling is the pink used against aquamarine in the oil "3 Figures and Sea Shore," where decorative nudes suddenly appear. At this point Marin's painting definitely stops threatening to retreat into black and white. The six excellent lead-pencil drawings "Pertaining to the Sea" show, however, the reason for this threat. The colorist in Marin has not yet got the complete ascendancy.

CLEMENT GREENBERG

RECORDS

DESCRIBED as the first of a new "Hall of Immortals" series, Victor's "Metropolitan Revivals—With Enrico Caruso and All Star Casts" (Set 953, $10) offers the 1912 recording of the Sextet from "Lucia" with Caruso, Tetrazzini, Amato, Journet, and others; the 1914 recording of the Quintet *E scherzo od è follia* from "Un Ballo in Maschera" with Caruso, Hempel, and others; the 1908 recording of the Quartet from "Rigoletto" with Caruso, Sembrich, Severina, and Scotti; the 1908 recording of the Quartet from "La Bohême" with Caruso, Farrar, Viafora, and Scotti; the 1912 recording of the Quartet *Dormi pur* from "Marta" with Caruso, Alda, Jacoby, and Journet; the 1912 recording of the Trio *Qual volutta trascorrere* from "I Lombardi" with Caruso, Alda, and Journet; the 1910 recording of the final Trio of "Faust" with Caruso, Farrar, and Journet; the 1919 recording of the Trio *Je viens célébrer la victoire* from "Samson et Dalila" with Caruso, Homer, and Journet.

The title of the set correctly describes its contents: Caruso was the featured singer in these recordings, the one whose phenomenal voice had to be reproduced in its full beauty and power; and one hears exciting recordings of this voice from 1908, when it was still light in color, to 1919, when it had achieved darker magnificence. It may be that with the limitations of early recording the clear reproduction of Caruso's voice in a large group could be achieved only at the cost of the other voices; the fact is that Tetrazzini's often is lost in the jumble above which Caruso's soars, and that even when it can be heard it has only a bare suggestion of the extraordinary loveliness we know it had; and that what one hears of Sembrich's singing is only enough to convey its superb musical style. In the first part of the "Bohême" Quartet, where the four voices are heard singly or two at a time, they are clear; and Farrar's lovely voice dominates the "Faust" Trio. In the later "Lombardi" Trio and "Marta" Quartet all the voices are clear; 1914 recording is able to keep Hempel's wonderful singing clear along with Caruso's in the "Ballo in Maschera" Quintet; and 1919 recording reproduces not only the rich beauty of Homer's contralto with increased fidelity, but the three-voiced texture with increased clarity and spaciousness.

I heard Caruso and Homer in "Samson"; I was already hearing opera at the Metropolitan when Caruso, Hempel, and others were singing in "Ballo in Maschera" and made the recording in this volume. These two recordings bring my own past experience into the living present for me; but even the others are exciting for me in the way they bring to life, however imperfectly, those historic occasions which I did not myself experience, when these legendary groups of singers were heard. One imperfection I am grateful for: possibly because of the Petrillo ban new orchestral accompaniments have not been dubbed in; and while, as a result, the recordings retain the original wheezy orchestral accompaniments, they also retain the original sounds of the voices, which would have been altered in the dubbing process. Some of the surfaces of my copy are quite noisy in spots.

Poorly performed on records of the past year were Beethoven's Eighth Symphony, by Walter with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony (C Set 525, $3.50; badly recorded); his Quartet Opus 59 No. 1, by the Busch Quartet (C Set 543, $6.50; poorly recorded); Florestan's aria from "Fidelio," by René Maison (C71410-D, $1); Debussy's "La Mer," by Rodzinski with the Cleveland Orchestra (C Set 531, $3.50); Mendelssohn's "Scotch" Symphony, by Mitropoulos with the Minneapolis Symphony (C Set 540, $4.50; poorly recorded); Mozart's *Or sai chi l'onore* and *Non mi dir* from "Don Giovanni," by Rose Bampton (V 11-8466, $1); Prokofiev's "Classical Symphony," by Golschmann with the St. Louis Symphony (V Set 942, $2.50); Rimsky-Korsakov's "Russian Easter" Overture, by Stokowski with the N. B. C. Symphony (V Set 937, $2.50); Schumann's Piano Quintet, by the Busch Quartet with Serkin, who played well (C Set 533, $4.50); Strauss's "Don Quixote," by Reiner with the Pittsburgh Symphony and Piatigorsky (C Set 506, $5.50); Stravinsky's "Firebird" Suite, by Stokowski with the N. B. C. Symphony (V Set 933, $2.50).

"No doubt you have long since read 'The Man With the Baton' by David Ewen and are well acquainted with its contents," wrote a reader of this column. What he assumed I was familiar with was Mr. Ewen's rating of Weingartner, in that book, as one of the supreme conductors of all time; and he went on to describe and answer what he considered outrageous misstatements about Weingartner in Mr. Ewen's recent "Dictators of the Baton." They constituted, he thought, "a piece of knavery which merits your attention and possibly an exposé." I answered that my correspondent was mistaken in his initial assumption: Mr. Ewen's writing was something I would not read for myself; and its possible influence was, I thought, so small that I did not feel obligated to read and discuss the books for others.

This brought me a letter in which my correspondent presented factual evidence that the influence of Mr. Ewen's books was greater than I thought. He had, for example, gone through the card file of the University Library and gave me the appalling numbers of the copies of the various books of Ewen that were available. "The University Radio Station uses his books as references in writing musical scripts. And one teacher of music appreciation, who has been director of such courses, uses his books as semi-texts and esteems his opinions highly (it was from this woman that I borrowed 'Dictators of the Baton'—with her high recommendation); and the music appreciation courses are the most popular courses in the music school, with registration for the most part from other colleges in the university. . . . Ewen, because of his 'interesting, non-technical manner of writing,' is doing a great deal more corrupting of American musical thought than you realize."

So it appears from the evidence my correspondent presented; but still I am reluctant to waste my time and *The Nation's* space on discussion of Mr. Ewen's books. Let readers of this column be guided by the paragraphs they have just read.

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Letter from London

Dear Sirs: You will have seen that small raids on London have been serialized for a month or so. They are very disagreeable and with a minimum of damage make a maximum of noise. One is less braced for them than for the big raids, which were so exhausting that one simply slept through them. I think, however, that, unpleasant as they are, they are excellent propaganda to the effect that the war is far from being over. We are all very ready to jump to the conclusion that the war will be over by next week, next month, next year, and these raids after a temporary lull remind us that it is by no means over. There is a lot of bugaboo about Hitler's "secret weapon" and fantastic descriptions of what this may be. While I should not put it past him to have brought nastiness to high achievement, I cannot help remembering that when we were in affliction and bombing was at its height, we also prated of "invisible rays" and other fairy tales which, for the moment, gave us comfort. I expect we shall have more shocks, but I do not really think that they can exceed those we have already managed to put up with.

One thing that strikes me in this fifth year of the war is a sort of general fatigue, especially among women. And if we have it, when things are so very much better, how greatly must it affect those whose fortunes are on the down, instead of the up, grade. The calling up of women of fifty aroused a good deal of feeling, more among men than among women, I think. And this was due to a sudden realization that the middle-aged woman was all that stood between a large part of the population and the complete disappearance of home. The middle-aged woman hasn't shone much in this war, except in so far as she has been commended publicly from time to time for working twenty-five hours a day. It has sometimes been mentioned that she is completely without service, without help; that she also works in factories, looks after her family, washes, scrubs, shops, when shopping means waiting in a crowd, looks after the old people, keeps a home for the young, and so on. Then came the call-up and with it the unpleasant realization of what life would be without "Mother," as husbands call her, and "Mum," as the children say. And suddenly it was considered very wrong that the poor old thing should be roused out of her dotage and made to work regular hours, instead of all hours, and, incidentally, that home should go to pot and that there should be no one to cook, or wash, or mend socks, or look after the cat, or make beds. August men have even been known lately to make their own beds without being asked, and some of them have realized that chops were not really so nice when cooked amid clouds of blue smoke as when "Mum" took a hand and curbed the exuberance of a fierce, masculine fry! I think perhaps American men do rather more for themselves than do our men, or rather, they do different things; and so the dependence of the Briton on the center of the household, who is also being asked to do factory or other work, has to be described to be realized. M. H.

London, November 15

Speaking of Profits

Dear Sirs: I quote the following from the editorial entitled the Showdown on Prices in your issue of November 27: "The elements that are seeking to break down the defenses against inflation—the large farmers, the food industry, the coal operators, *railway employees,* and a few other highly organized labor groups—are, on the other hand, among those that have gained most, relatively speaking, as a result of the war" (my italics).

As a representative of one of the railroad brotherhoods, I want to point out some facts in connection with wages paid to railroad employees and let you judge whether, relatively speaking, railroad employees are among those who have gained the most, as you put it, from this war.

Maintenance-of-way employees (track men) receive 48 to 52 cents an hour; yard switchmen or brakemen, $7.56 for an eight-hour day; yard firemen, $7.73 for an eight-hour day; clerks, from $70 to $150 per month; skilled shop men, boilermakers, machinists, blacksmiths, $7.20 for an eight-hour day. Road engineers, conductors, firemen, and trainmen average $9.50 for a day of 100 miles or eight hours. They get no money for expenses when they are away from home. About one-half of these men spend 50 per cent of their time away from home.

I regret that you classified us with the profit groups, of which we certainly are not a part.

You also failed to mention railroad management, which is surely profiting greatly as a result of the increased business in moving troops and material of war. G. F. IRVINE, Chairman,
California State Legislative Board,
Brotherhood of Locomotive
Firemen and Enginemen

San Francisco, Cal., December 1

Congress and World Organization

Dear Sirs: Many of your readers who believe in a democratic world organization and are looking for a means to make Congress understand that the American people are ready to assume the responsibility of such an organization will be interested to know that Free World groups are being formed all over the country for this purpose.

One of the activities of these groups is to distribute a ballot listing the following three questions: (1) Do you believe the United States should belong to an international organization with authority to settle disputes peacefully between nations? (2) Should such an organization have available a military force to be used solely to stop military aggression and maintain peace? (3) Should the United States take the initiative in calling the United Nations together to form such an organization now?

The Greenwich Village Group of American Free World, the first in New York City, has been conducting an intensive ballot campaign which we hope will be a pattern for a nation-wide effort. Congressmen will be informed of the results of the poll.

Appended is a list of regional headquarters of the American Free World Association. We urge all readers who want to mobilize mass public opinion behind the idea of world organization to ask the nearest regional office for information on how to start a local group or to join one already in existence.

New York Chapter: Anita Willcox,

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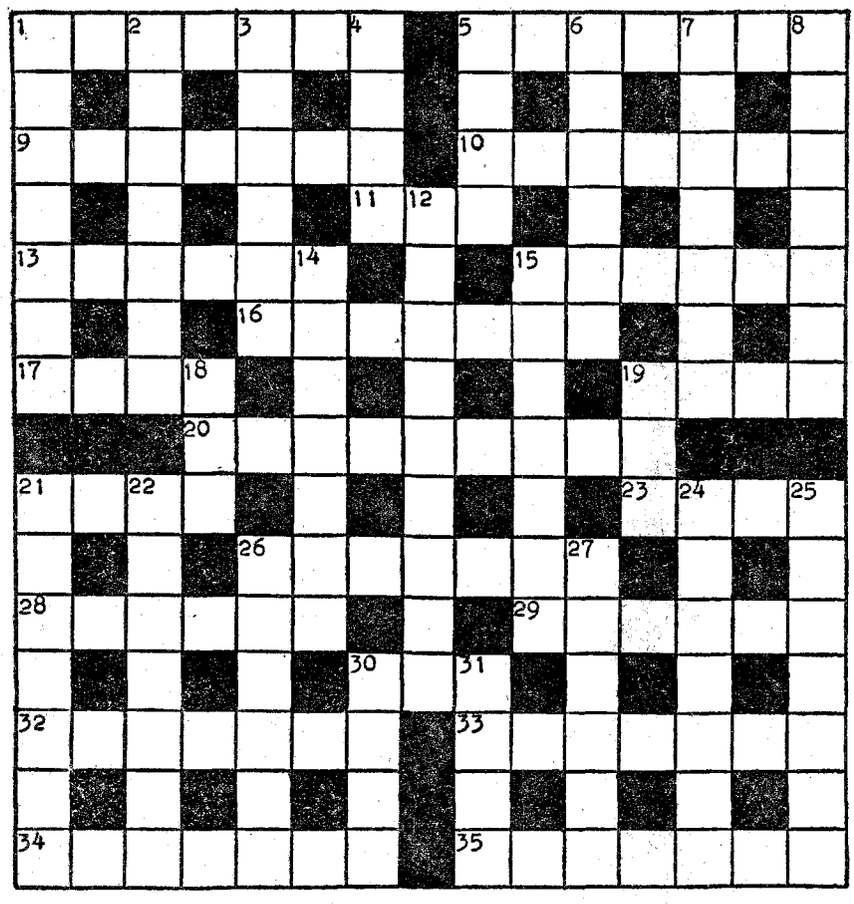
Cross-Word Puzzle No. 44

By JACK BARRETT



ACROSS

1 U. S. Naval commander (1779-1820)
5 Storm which brings trouble to the Royal Navy
9 Is this ship in a Baltic port? No, just the other way about!
10 Unchilled, it will be observed
11 Convict
13 For each one a portion
15 Pet name for an A-A gun
16 Train put into words
17 Posthumous evidence of wisdom in a goose
19 These trees flower before they leave
20 A 100% American (two words, 3 and 6)
21 Loaf
23 Great dog, this
26 Salve
28 This board has divers purposes
29 If it hadn't been closed up it might have been leased
30 Bawled out Balaam in the Old Testament story
32 Preliminary skirmishes, as it were, in chess
33 In proportion (two words, 3 and 4)
34 It's dear (anag.)
35 Lies close

DOWN

1 Fed up with American food
2 The one on prices is beginning to look more like a colander
3 You will get this in a canter
4 Anglers use it, with or without a hundred on it
5 Flavor of a bay horse?
6 Parts of dynamos which revolve
7 In good spirits
8 Singularity
12 People frequently used to ask them when the balloon went up
14 ------- perspiration, perhaps
15 Appoints
18 You have seen this before in Crosswords
19 Time in sporting parlance
21 Not a hidden quality, it seems
22 He makes horse-furniture
24 Ancient form of greeting which is worse than "cats and dogs" in bad weather (two words, 3 and 4)
25 Ingratiates, like lobes
26 The sort of remarks that are better left unsaid
27 Singers whose notes have become slightly mixed
30 They juggle with these snakes in Egypt
31 Nine inches

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 43

ACROSS:—1 SINECURE; 6 BRAG; 10 JABOT; 11 ADO; 12 ILIUM; 13 REDEEM; 16 CHINKS; 17 RAPPORT; 18 IMPI; 20 EMMA; 22 SQUIRMS; 23 FEAR; 24 UGLY; 25 DEBASED; 27 NATURE; 29 TUNNEL; 34 RACED; 35 SUN; 36 NOVEL; 37 STUN; 38 ANNUALLY.

DOWN:—2 IN BED; 3 ESTHER; 4 UNAU; 5 ETON; 6 BRIGHT; 7 ALIEN; 8 AJAR; 9 EMISSARY; 14 MARQUEE; 15 OPTICAL; 16 CRUMPET; 18 INFANTRY; 19 PEA; 21 MUG; 25 DRYDEN; 26 DUENNA; 28 TACIT; 30 NAVAL; 31 LILY; 32 OSSA; 33 ANON.

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New York, November 22

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